

LETTERS

Moral *and* Entertaining,

IN PROSE and VERSE.

By the AUTHOR of
FRIENDSHIP in DEATH.

PART II.

The Second EDITION.



L O N D O N:

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LETTERS

Moral *and* Entertaining.

PART II.

LETTER I.

To Lady SOPHIA, from a young Woman of Quality, relating the Occasion of her leaving her Father's House.

MADAM,



HEREVER I am, it will be a Pleasure to you, I am persuaded, to know I have found a Retreat entirely to my own Satisfaction: The Occasion of my Flight and Concealment, you are partly acquainted with: I found my Father inflexible in his Resolution, of marrying me to a Foreigner of great Distinction, one of his own Principles, a bigotted Papist. My Mother, you know, was a strict Protestant, and by her Marriage Articles had secured her own
B Liberty,

Liberty, and that of Educating her Daughters in the same Profession : I was their only Child, carefully instructed in those sacred Truths, which by the Assistance of Heaven, I will never renounce ; but rather give up my Title to all the dazzling Advantages the World can tempt me with. 'Tis for this I am a voluntary Exile from my Father's House ; who, after my Mother's Death, intrench'd on my Religious Liberty, restrain'd me from the Publick Worship, and forbid me reading my Bible. These Severities, with the *French* Match he was treating for me, put me on the desperate Adventure of privately quitting his Family, and securing my Freedom in some humble Disguise. No Person on Earth was privy to my Design, but a near Relation of my Mother's, a Person of strict Honour and Piety ; who encouraged me to sacrifice every thing, rather than renounce my Faith, or break my Peace with Heaven and my own Conscience.

I got the Habit of a Country Girl, and with this Gentleman's Assistance, was carried into one of the most fertile Counties in *England*, 'till we came near a large Farm House, of which he had some Knowledge, and there he left me to make my own Fortune. I went on with cautious Steps 'till I came to the Entrance of a square Court, furrounded with a Hedge of Hawthorn in its full Bloom : Here I met the Mistress of the Family, she appeared young, and in a clean modest Dress was perfectly agreeable : There was something in her Aspect so gentle, and beneficent, that I could



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could not help being interested in her Welfare, from the first Moment I saw her.

SHE was then dealing out the Remains of a plentiful Table, to a Company of indigent People; who with lifted Hands and grateful Hearts implored Heaven to reward her, in a thousand Blessings. A very pretty Boy and Girl, with sparkling Eyes and rosy Cheeks, stood hanging on her Apron; who to mimic their Mother, gave away all the little Treasure they had in their Pockets, to the Beggars Children, and then fell a crying because she would not suffer them to pull off their own Shoes and Stockings, to give to some that were bare-footed.

As soon as she had dismissed her Dependants, I offered my Service, and told her the Distresses to which I must be exposed, if she refused me; She perceived my Concern was unaffected, and seeing me young, with the Bloom of Health in my Looks, (without any of that impertinent Caution I expected) she agreed to receive me into her Service: She then happen'd to want a Servant, rather to share with her in the Management of a large Family, than to be employed in any domestick Drudgery. I know not why, but she seem'd pleased with me, and I with equal Content entered my new Station without any melancholy Reviews of my past Grandeur, the Dignity of my Birth, or the Delicacy of my Education. The glorious Motive, for which I had resigned the splendid Vanities of Life, gave an unspeakable Alacrity to my Mind, and filled it with

that ineffable Peace, that springs from conscious Virtue.

*Be these Celestial Consolations mine,
And I the World with all its Pomp resign.*

I did not see my new Master till the Evening, when he came home, with a Train, not of Beaus and powdered Footmen, but of industrious honest Labourers; some of his own Household, and others hired by the Day, whom he punctually paid at the Close of it; repeating that Rule of the Sacred Scripture, *Thou shalt not sleep with the Wages of the Hireling*. He is a very grave Man, twice the Age of his Wife, a Person of great Prudence, and unblemish'd Honesty; very hospitable to Strangers, as gentle and compassionate to his Servants; Country Business is his great Delight, in the Management of which Heaven has bless'd him with uninterrupted Prosperity, and vast Increase.

THE Farm House is indeed somewhat antique, but spacious and pleasant: A more agreeable Situation cannot be imagin'd, nor a greater Variety of sylvan Scenes described in Poetry; unless Mr. *Thompson's* SPRING and SUMMER Seasons, could rise in one enchanting Prospect. The wide Landskip round is all my Master's Propriety; his snowy Flocks are ranging on the Hills; his grazing Herds, lowing through the Plains: The Mountains are crowned with the great Creator's Bounty, and the Valleys made vocal with his Praises.

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THESE Scenes of Innocence and Plenty bring back the Patriarchal Ages to my View, and give me a sort of pious Pleasure. Methinks I see the Plains of *Mamre*, cover'd with the wealthy *Hebrews* Flocks and Herds; or shifting the Scene for the fruitful Fields of *Haran*, the beauteous *Rachel* following her fleecy Charge, seems to come in view; *Boaz* and his Reapers appeared to my Fancy, in the jovial Month of Harvest.

IN that chearful Season, here was no wild Riot, no rude Intemperance; nothing but harmless Merriment appeared among any of my Master's Domesticks: As soon as they enter his Service, he gives them a *Bible* and the *Practice of Piety*; with strict Orders, that they appear constantly on the Lord's Day at the Publick Worship, unless they have such an Excuse as they dare carry to the last Tribunal.

IT will not be incredible to one of your Piety, that I can make my self easy, in a way of Life, so different from the Gaieties of a Court, to which I have been inured. I am not only easy, but really happy; my Mistress, who has a Sweetness of Temper not to be equall'd, is fond of me, and leaves me not to be idle, but, which is much better, to chuse my own Employment. You know my Stature is above the common Height, and since I came here, I am rather grown taller, and somewhat more plump, so that a little Business does me no manner of Harm.

I have entirely put off the Fine Lady, and all my Court Airs; I have almost forgot I am an Earl's

Earl's Daughter, and should start at the Sound of Lady FRANCES; instead of that, I am plain ROSALINDA, without any other Appellation, but what the gentle Swains now and then give me, of a Handsome Lads, or a Proper Damsel; with which I am infinitely better pleased, than when I was an Angel, or a Goddess, and impiously address'd in the Strains of Adoration. If ever I return to the Modish World, I must learn to dance again, having perfectly forgot to make my Honours: I have made but one Curt'sey since I came here, and that was to a Squire, who, because it was something low, and not finish'd in the twinkling of an Eye, catch'd me by the Hand, verily believing I was sinking to the Ground in a fainting Fit. I am not turn'd Quaker, but I have laid aside all Ceremony, and call every body in the Village by their Christian Names; except my Master and Mistress, and the Parson of the Parish, whom I can't pass by without telling you, he is a Man of exemplary Piety, of universal Charity, and a great Blessing to this Place.

My splendid Distinction, of being the Head Servant, as it gives me a Pretence to keep my Distance, and to be as reserved as I think fit; so it frees me from any Drudgery, but what is my own Choice: the worst of which is rubbing a long Oaken Table, that graces the Hall, and is kept as bright as a Looking-Glass. My *Saturday's* Work, is dressing four or five spacious Chimneys, with Pionies, Holly-oaks, or Branches
of

of Bays. Some Part of my Time (and that the most delightful) is spent in rambling the Fields, with my Master's Children, the pretty Boy and Girl I mention'd : While they are following their little Sports, I give up my Thoughts to some innocent Reverie, or Pious Meditation ; — To this the View of the fair Creation invites me ; — Here the present Deity seems to challenge a natural Homage, — While he cheers me, in the Glory of the Sun, — Refreshes me in the fragrant Breeze, — Is Beauty in the Flowers of the Field, — and Harmony in the Nightingale's Voice. With a sort of Extacy, I repeated *Milton's* Morning Hymn, to which the *Italian* Translation gives new Life, and Musick :

*Gloriose opre tue tutte son queste
Padre del Bene Omnipotente ; E' tuo
Questo composto universal, cotanto.
A Mervigla bello ; or qua'l sarui
Oggetto di Stupor, tu stesso
Ineffabil. —*

But I am not always in the Sublime ; I sometimes descend to gather Cowslips and Daisies, or pursue some gaudy Butterfly, with my pretty Companions ; or please my self with dressing up their fine flaxen Hair with Tufts of Flowers.

THESE you will think are very guiltless Amusements ; and if I should tell you I have an Amour, altogether as guiltless, dear Lady *Sophia*, would you not believe me ? I suppose you will ask me, if my Charms have captivated the Lord of the Manor, or a Justice of the *Quorum*, or
the

the High-Sheriff of the County: Alas! my Ambition sleeps, I should not aim at these glorious Conquests, not even in my best Apparel; and in that I must tell you I am as fine as any Shepherdess in an *Opera*. But if you was to see the gentle Youth, that I have the Vanity to think sighs for me, you would believe him some poetical Form, he is so elegant, so beautiful, that when he appears, the Scene is all *Arcadia*; and (except a certain Person, with a Star and Garter) he is the handsomest Youth that ever your Eyes beheld. Nor will you wonder, when I tell you his Descent is from a younger Branch of the S—— Family, a Race remarkable for Heroes and Beauties. By the Extravagance of his Ancestors, the Estate has been long sunk to about two or three hundred a Year: This Youth was left from his Infancy to the Care of a Grandmother, and bred as well as her narrow Fortune would allow; but 'tis easy to perceive, he owes nothing but to Nature, which has given him every Advantage, without the Vices of a polite Education: He is about my own Age, hardly turn'd of Nineteen. When I first saw him, he was sitting under a shady Beach, with an *English Pastor Fido* in his Hand; he appear'd like another *Adonis*, in the softest Bloom of Life. I can't describe him better than in the following Verses, writ by Lady B——s on another Subject:

*His faultless Shape appear'd with ev'ry Grace,
While Beauty sate triumphant in his Face;
His Hair, the palest Brown, in Ringlets flow'd,
And Charms beyond the Reach of Art bestow'd.*

His

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*His Forehead white as Snow, his radiant Eyes
The bright celestial Blue that paints the Skies.
A guiltless Blush his blooming Cheeks disclose,
The native Tincture of an op'ning Rose.
His Aspect open, artless, and serene,
Reveal'd the spotless Mind that dwelt within.*

In this Perfection of youthful Charms, he has all that Modesty that rises from a Delicacy of Thought, and a constant Fear of offending. I am so demure and reserved, that he has not the least Suspicion of my Partiality for him; nor dares discover his own for me, though he believes his Station so superior to mine: He looks and sighs, but is as silent as your Great Grandfather's Busto that stands on his Monument. I am indeed a very great Prude, and never gave him an Opportunity to speak on this Subject; but if I should, the Attempt would infallibly suffocate him. He lately brought me a Basket of Flowers from a little neat Garden of his Grandmother's; but he stood so long in Suspense, with the Basket in his Hands, that I feared the fragrant Blossoms would have been withered, before he could come to a Resolution to let me have them.

HE would certainly have presented them to the QUEEN with more Assurance, and a better Grace, had he been received with those propitious Smiles, which never fail to encourage modest Virtue, and scatter every human Care.

ROSALINDA:

C

LET-



LETTER II.

To Lady SOPHIA, from the Same.



OT bubbling Fountains to the thirsty Swain — were ever more welcome, dear Lady *Sophia*, than your Letter to me: nothing can be more solemn than the Profession of your Friendship, nor more agreeable than your Raillery on my Gallant. He may be as you imagine, one of Count *Gabalís's Sylphs*, or some gentle Spirit of the Vale, propitious to virtuous Lovers; or of the Number of the Sylvan *Genii*, with whom he seems to converse more than with any thing of human Race: I have seldom seen him, but either walking in some verdant Enclosure, under a Hedge-Row of shady Trees, or sitting with a Flute in his Hand, by some purling Rivulet, mimicking the Nightingale's pensive Note; while the melting Musick glides along the Stream, and echoes through the flowery Dale. In one of my Rambles, with my little Mistress, I followed the Course of a pretty Cascade, which fell from an easy Descent, and led me to a natural Bower of Trees, whose Branches mingling at the Top, formed

formed a lofty Arch, and excluded the Noon-day's sultry Beams: I entered the silent Retreat, with as much Veneration as if it had been sacred to some invisible Power; but how great was my Surprise, when I saw the lovely Youth reclined on a mossy Bank, lost in downy Sleep! the verdant Couch was canopied over with Ivy twining with Honyfuckles.

NEVER did any Thing human appear so beautiful! A Blush, like the rosy Morning, painted his Face, while Smiles of Peace and conscious Innocence seemed to bless the golden Slumber: I gazed for a few Moments, with the same guiltless Delight, as an ethereal Being would inspire; and then softly withdrew.

If he is, as you flatter me, some bright Inhabitant of the Air, the Purity of my Passion is very agreeable to a Lover of that kind; 'tis a harmless lambent Flame, that plays about my Heart, and gives me no manner of Uneasiness; it is such a Sanctity of Affection, as neither interrupts nor prophanes my Devotion; it has something more than the Tenderness of Friendship, and less than the Warmth and Violence of Passion; and seems like the Dictates of guiltless Nature, to soften the Fatigue of my new Station.

THESE Refinements, Lady *Sophia*, will, I fear, be a little incredible to you, who are dazzled with the Lustre of a Duke's Coronet, and have placed your Affections on mortal Charms.

I AM come now to the serious Part of your Letter: I know that Religion is the governing Principle of your Actions; which makes me the more surpris'd, that you should persuade me to put myself on the Hazard of a second Trial. Are you sure that neither the Flattery nor Threatenings of my Father will prevail with me to renounce the Reformed Religion, and perjure myself, by giving my Vows to a Man my Soul detests? Do you think the Sparks of Vanity and Ambition extinguish'd in my Breast? that Greatness and Pleasure have no Charms! or that the tender Affection I have for my Father will ever be effac'd? Oh! Lady *Sophia*, if you knew the Anguish it cost me, to break through these soft, these powerful Engagements, you would not persuade me to quit this peaceful Retreat, and put the Event on another Trial.

YOUR Care for me seems confin'd to this World, whatever becomes of me in the next: Could you meet me again shining in the Drawing-Room, or sparkling in the Ring, it would perhaps content you; though I never glittered among the Stars, nor was admitted into the celestial Assemblies. If I lost the Musick of the Spheres, I suppose your Heart would be at rest, could I once more hear the transporting Sound of — a *Title*, and be restored to my lost Dignity: and yet the Possession of these Privileges never put me in an Extasy; nor can I help fancying, *Rosalinda* has as musical a Sound as Lady *Frances*: I never found a Spell in those Right Honourable Syllables,

Syllables, for an aching Head, or an heavy Heart: My Ladyship finds as great Satisfaction in ranking a Set of Delph Dishes on a Free-stone Chimney-piece, as ever I had in disposing my fine China on an *India* Cabinet.

A clean Cambrick Cap, and an Holland Gown wrought with natural Flowers, is the Top of my Finery; in which I like my self as well, and think I look as handsome, as when I was dressed in Brocades and Jewels for a Birth-Night: Indeed that happy Occasion always gave an Alacrity to my Thoughts, and carried me through the glorious Toil with Pleasure: But I have a Mind as easy and innocent now, as when burdened with those costly Ornaments; a Red Cross-Knot, a Glass Necklace, and Flowers in my Bosom, are the only useless Parts of my Dress; which is either the Gift of Nature, or honestly paid for: in which I am a thousand times more happy than I should be in borrowed Finery, at the Expence of some industrious Trader's Ruin, and that of his whole Family.

You find, Lady *Sophia*, I am very well at Ease, and enjoy a perfect Tranquillity, in this humble Station: It was a Principle truly Rational and Divine, that induced me to give up all the splendid Distinctions of my Birth, the Ease and Delicacy to which I had been accustomed, rather than basely deny those sacred Truths, to which my Soul religiously assented, and whose Divine Articles some of my glorious Ancestors have signed with their Blood.

INSTEAD

INSTEAD of looking back with Regret on my past Grandeur, the Resignation gives me a Taste of celestial Joy; the Songs of Angels could not soothe me with softer Harmony, than what results from the secret Approbation of my own Reason; and while all within is peaceful and serene, whether I am in a Palace or Cottage, my Happiness is secure.

ROSALINDA.



LET-



L E T T E R III.

To Lady SOPHIA, from the Same.



OUR Advice, dear Lady *Sophia*, is without question well meant, but I dare not follow it; my Father is so far from relenting, that I have had Intelligence since I came here, that he has sworn by all that is Holy, unless I will marry Count *Altamont*, and embrace the *Romish* Religion, he will settle his whole Estate on some Monastery at his Decease.

THIS was what I expected; and I am sure you will not persuade me to renounce Heaven, and damn my self, for the sordid Purchase of Eighty thousand Pounds; nor would you considerately advise me, to hazard a celestial Advancement for a gilded Coronet, or prefer the Flattery of mistaken Mortals to the Approbation of Angels: They have been Witnesses of my pious Vows; and should I violate my Faith, or turn Apostate to Heaven, those Ministers of Light would bring in their awful Evidence, and stand my Accusers at the last dreadful Tribunal: And can you in earnest think it the Effect of
Wisdom

Wisdom and just Reflexion, to dare the Menaces of Divine Justice, rather than incur my Father's unmerited Resentment? Such I must term it, having found his Affections entirely alienated before I left him: There is full Evidence he was pleased with my Flight, and takes no Thought of making any Enquiry about it.

BUT Heaven can witness, with what Reluctance I have torn my self from the Sight of this unnatural Parent; what Anguish, what Pangs of Affection it cost me! This was the most difficult Part of my Conquest; the Delicacy and Softness to which I had been inured, the Eclat of Birth and Quality, Reputation and Esteem of my Friends, I resigned with some Degree of Fortitude: But here Nature with specious Arguments opposed, and had triumphed in my Perdition, unassisted by the Sacred Oracles; to them I applied in this Perplexity, and received Aid from the heavenly Illumination: Here I found it by the eternal Truth determined, — *He that loves Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me.* — I worshipped and obeyed the celestial Dictates.

THIS was no rash, inconsiderate Action, but the Effect of Reason and Design: After having counted the Cost, I found the Odds to be infinite; the Damage was momentary, the Recompense unlimited and immense.

*'Tis finish'd now, the great deciding Part;
The World's subdu'd, and Heav'n has all my Heart.
Earth's*

*Earth's gaudy Shews, and Pomp of Courts, adieu!
For ever now I turn my Eyes from you.*

WHAT can the World, what can the Artifice of Hell propose, to tempt me to relinquish my Choice! What could they lay in the Balance against the Sovereign Good! What could they offer as an Equivalent to the Favour of the Infinite Divinity, whose Smiles enlighten the Realms of Joy, and fill the celestial Inhabitants with unutterable Extasy! — Ask those happy Spirits who know what the Light of his Countenance imports, what should buy one Moment's Interval of their Bliss: — Ask some radiant Cherub, amidst his flaming Raptures, at what Price he values his Enjoyment: — And when they have named the Purchase, Earth and Hell may try to balance my glorious Expectations.

Pleasure would court in vain, and Beauty smile;
Glory in vain my Wishes would beguile;
The Persecutor's Rage I would not fear,
Let Death in ev'ry horrid Form appear,
And with his keenest Darts my Breast assail;
When Breath, and ev'ry vital Spring, shall fail,
This sacred Flame on brighter Wings shall rise,
And unextinguish'd reach its native Skies.

A thousand times blest be that propitious Power, who from the Plenitude of Blifs, and the highest Exaltation of Glory, descended to low Mortality; and by his own great Example and

D Sufferings

Sufferings animated my Breast with this Divine Fortitude, and marked a Way to Victory and immortal Honour. How sincerely I have followed the heavenly Illumination, my Witness is within, and my Record on high.

My Father I know is inexorable, and has cut me off from his paternal Care, and all the Privileges of my Birth; but while I look forward to the bright Recompence prepared for suffering Virtue, this Loss sits lightly on my Soul.

BUT Friendship with a stronger Force detains me: Here my Soul is in Suspence. — Dear Lady *Sophia*, how shall I speak my last Adieu! I feel the Pangs of Separation, an Anguish beyond all the Emphasis of human Learning to utter. — Adieu! we must meet no more, till the Course of Nature is dissolved, and the Sun has measured his last radiant Circle round the Skies.

ROSALINDA.

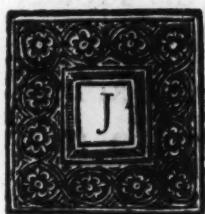


L E T.



LETTER IV.

To LAURINDA.



JOIN with me, dear *Laurinda*, in thanking Heaven, that I am once more returned to the Mansion-Seat of my Forefathers; for had I staid much longer in *London*, I had certainly left my Wits there: Would you believe that my serious retired Temper could find Charms in a Multitude, or my Heart be held Captive in the splendid Circle of a Blue Garter! that I who have been used to view the Stars which glittered over my Head in a clear Night, should be dazzled with the Lustre of an embroidered one! And yet all this has befallen me. I was the other Day making a Visit to *Cleomira*, when the Duke of †††'s Chariot with three laced Footmen behind it stopped at the Door; I was at the Window and saw him alight: He is really a handsome Man, but his Charms were extremely encreased by the Pomp which surrounded him; the respectful Awe with which his Attendants approached him, heightened the Majesty of his Appearance; his Legs were form-

ed into the exactest Symmetry by the magnificent Clocks of his Stockings: The Deference which was paid him at his first coming into the Room, taught me to look upon him as something above the Race of Mortals, which I had been used to converse with. When I had Time to consider his Face, I found it received a much greater Addition from a fair Wig loaded with Powder, than it could have done from artless Ringlets of the most lovely Hair. After he had sat a little, he asked *Cleomira* to go with him to his House, to see a fine Set of Hangings, which were just come over from the *Gobelins*: She excused herself, as being obliged to stay and entertain me; but he asked me to be of the Party; and as soon as *Cleomira's* Coach was ready, we all went together. But if I was charmed with the sparkling Chariot and embroidered Coat, I was enchanted with the House; the lofty Roofs, the painted Stair-case, the gilded Wainscot, struck me with a Pleasure I had never felt; however it was an unquiet Joy, and I longed to be at home, for I thought myself in a dangerous Situation. As soon as *Cleomira* had set me down at my Lodgings, I immediately set about packing up my Things, and the very next Morning in the Height of my Extasy left *London* and all its Pomp behind me: But how are either my Eyes or every Object altered since I have been absent! The House used to appear a handsome ancient Building, but now I find it only a *Gothick* Heap of Stone; the Cielings are so low, that I am
afraid

afraid of knocking my Brains out ; and the Entry so narrow, that if I should meet any body, I should certainly run back again, for fear of being squeezed against the Wall in endeavouring to pass. I want to pull down the venerable Pictures of my Ancestors, because they were not painted in *Italy* : The Bow-Windows terrify me, and must be changed into *Venetian* ones ; for there is no bearing the Light which strikes thro' so unfashionable a Piece of Architecture. The rosy Daughters of the neighbouring Squires are become in my Eyes awkward Figures, and there is something so ungenteel and coarse in such an Exuberance of Health, that I cannot bear to look at them : The young Men of the Village appear downright Bumpkins, and I cannot perceive any Beauty in the chearful Bloom of their Countenances, or just Proportion of their Shape through the melancholy Disguise of unpowdered Locks, and plain Broad-Cloth Apparel ; if they talk to me, I am amazed how a Man has the Assurance to open his Mouth any where who has not a Right to speak in the House of Peers, and can never comprehend how any thing worth communicating can enter into a Head which was never circled with a Coronet : Sentences which are uttered by plain *Cleon* have no Force ; though perhaps the same Words would have all the Charms of Eloquence if pronounced by an Earl. You see I am not very happy at present in the Society of my old Acquaintance ; but I hope this Delicacy will soon wear

wear off, or I shall not be able to behave myself patiently among a Set of People with whom I have formerly spent many happy Hours.

ADIEU, my dear *Laurinda*. My Politeness will not lessen, but increase the Value I set upon your Friendship; since I am sure the Beau-Monde would approve me for being unalterably

Yours,

LAVINIA.



LET-



LETTER V.

*The Sequel of the Story of SYLVIA, in the First
Part of — Letters Moral and Entertaining.
— To BELINDA.*

MADAM,



OUR Suspicions are too just, of the Occasion of my late Sickness: I have waited with great Impatience for the Satisfaction of disclosing the Secrets of my Soul to you; but my Strength would not sooner permit me to give you this Proof of my Obedience to your Commands, and the Confidence I have in your Fidelity.

WHY was I formed with these soft Inclinations, this fatal Propensity to Love! How happy are you, who amidst the gayest Advantages of Youth and Fortune can act with such a graceful Regularity, and govern your Passions with an absolute Command, free from those tender Emotions which interrupt the Felicity of my Life!

I SPENT the last Winter in the Country with my Father, whose pious Instructions, confirmed
by

by his own Practice, directed me to a refined and immortal Happiness: Nor could any Invitations from the *Comtesse de R****, nor all my Brother's Importunity, prevail with me to quit a Retirement, where I found so much Peace and unmolested Tranquillity. My criminal Passion for *Monsieur le Comte* — seemed perfectly extinguished, and gave Place to a nobler Attachment; Heaven had all my Vows, thither with a Divine Ambition my Soul aspired: This sacred Ardour like Incense mingled with the Morning Fragrance, and cheered the Evening Shades; the whispering Brooks and sylvan Retreats witnessed to the heavenly Flame; where in Language like this I often addressed the invisible but present Divinity:

“ O Thou whom unseen I love, tell me by
 “ what gentle Influence thou dost attract my
 “ Desires: these Eyes have never seen thy lovely
 “ Face; no Accent of thy Voice has reached
 “ my Ear; and yet Thou art more intimate to
 “ my Soul than any of the Objects of Sense: To
 “ Thee I tell my inmost Care, and open every
 “ Grief; while some heavenly Gale dispels the
 “ Gloom, and breathes eternal Peace and Fra-
 “ grance on my Soul.

“ Not blest Arabia, when her Spices flow,
 “ And load the Western Breezes with their Spoils,
 “ Is half so sweet; nor half so sweet the Breath
 “ Of op'ning Roses, when the dewy Morn

“ Renew's

" *Renews the Garden's Pride, while the glad Sun*
 " *Calls out the blooming Life of ev'ry Flow'r.*

" My Wishes fly beyond the bounds of this low
 " Creation, and terminate in Thee, the Spring
 " of fresh and ever-blooming Joys: 'Tis Thee
 " abstractly Thee, Oh uncreated Beauty, that
 " I love! not as the Miser loves his Wealth,
 " or the Ambitious his Grandeur; not as the
 " Libertine loves his Pleasure, or the generous
 " Man his Friend: These are flat Similitudes,
 " and would profane the sacred Ardour; but
 " thou canst read the unutterable Thought, and
 " explain the secret Meaning of my Soul; search
 " its inmost Recesses, and if thou findest any
 " Competitor there, revolve the Darling Vanity,
 " and blot every Name but thine from my
 " Heart.

IN this Elevation, my dear *Belinda*, would you not think me secure from mortal Charms? Could one of your equal Temper conceive there was such an easy Transition from Devotion to Love, — mere earthly Love! Would the most uncharitable Person in the World have said, that from this sublime Situation I should in a few Moments quit the Skies, and bid the Angels farewell!

BUT such was the Event; my Brother coming hastily to me into the Garden, where I was walking, told me the *Comte de R**** intended him the Honour of a Visit, and would be with

us the next Morning: He left me immediately, without observing the Consternation I was in, or giving himself any Trouble about my Panick or Vapours.

I KNEW not what, nor where I was; the celestial Scenes that had just before engaged my Contemplation, vanished; the Heavens were no more; Paradise with all its Glories disappeared like a Fairy Vision; my Flight was finished, and I sunk to low Mortality again: I asked myself if I were asleep, or awake, in my right Senses, or out of my Wits; whether I really knew my own Name, and was indeed the happy Person that a few Minutes before had looked with Indifference or Contempt on all the gay Allurements of the World. In this Confusion I stood as if I had been fixed to the Place by a Spell, till my Father sent for me to consult about some Family Affairs, as he had always done since my Mothers Death.

THE *Comte's* Visit was wholly intended to my Brother; they were engaged in the most perfect Friendship, founded on resembling Virtues, and an equal Abhorrence of every kind of Vice: 'Twas a full Year since I had seen him; 'tis probable he never suspected my Folly, nor once imagined the Cause of my Retirement. This yielded me some Satisfaction, and gave me Hopes I should conceal my guilty Passion.

BUT I was undeceived; the Moment the lovely Youth arrived, an innate Grandeur gave a Dignity to his Mien; the Splendor of Virtue
bright-

brightened his Aspect; there was something in his whole Behaviour so benign and engaging, that I found it impossible to resist the soft Infinition; the pleasing Delirium entirely possessed me, and I betrayed myself by a thousand Inadvertencies: However, I had some Pauses of Discretion, and started with Horror at my own Injustice; my Soul was full of Anxiety, to think how I should bear this inward Struggle for the seven or eight Days which the *Comte* intended to stay, the first of which was not yet past.

THE Summer was now in its Pride, and as soon as the Evening made Walking pleasant, my Brother conducted his agreeable Guest through a Variety of charming Walks to an artificial Grotto: The Top was round and lofty, painted with a beautiful Sky, hung with a great Number of little Crystal Sconces formed like Stars; in the midst there was placed one larger than the rest, shaped like a Crescent. The Sides of this fine Cavity were Rock-work, adorned with Branches of Coral, Mother-of-Pearl, and a great Variety of counterfeit Gems, sparkling among the well-imitated Cliffs of Marble: 'Twas paved in Flowers with a kind of Mosaick Work; the Seats were shaped like little Banks, covered with Green Velvet instead of Moss. In this enchanting Retreat a Supper was ordered, attended with an exquisite Concert of Voices and Instruments: *Milton's* Morning Hymn was sung, and several of the solemnest *Italian* Compositions.

The whole Performance was noble and pathetic ; while the Gardens and Groves around returned a thousand soft melodious Echoes.

THIS grave Musick was exactly suited to the charming Stranger's Genius ; and yet through the whole Evening never did any thing appear so abstract, so listless, and so inattentive. As soon as the Entertainment was over, and the Company withdrawn (except my Brother) he begged to be excused from staying a Week, as he designed, and that he might be suffered to return the next Morning ; which after some Apologies on both sides was agreed.

I WAS so ill in the Morning, that it prevented my seeing the *Comte*, who could not but discover the unhappy Conquest he had made ; and certainly left us so suddenly, to free me from such a criminal Perplexity, or to stifle the same kindling Guilt in his own Breast : this last was what my Brother believed, and thought it as glorious an Instance of Virtue and Friendship, as it was possible for a Man in the Warmth of youthful Passion to give.

WHATEVER it was, my Disorder increased, till it came to a dangerous Fever ; Death was now in View ; my tender Cares and fancied Distresses were lost in a more important Concern ; the little Amusements of the World vanished like Dreams ; a hovering Mist veiled the Face of Nature, and darkened all its Beauty ; nor could any Sound of Joy cheer the sullen Hours : I was
on

on the Confines of the Grave, entering the Habitations of the Dead: this Prospect had a Solemnity in it, beyond whatever I conceived in the Hours of Health.

"Think, vain fond Heart, when on the Steep

"Of that tremendous, awful Deep,

"Eternity, in sad Suspense I stood;

"How all my trifling Hopes, and Fears,

"My senseless Joys, and idle Tears,

"Vanish'd at Prospect of the frightful Flood.

I stood shivering on the Brink, looking forward with a dreadful Curiosity; all before me was hid in Darkness and impenetrable Secresy; the great Experiment was untried, the Region of Spirits strange and unknown; 'twas yet a Perhaps, an Uncertainty, on which my Hopes depended; the grand Question, whether I should be happy or miserable for ever, was yet undecided; I was startled at a mere Possibility of being shut out of the starry Courts, and excluded from the illustrious Assembly of happy Immortals.

INDEED I had no Intervals of Despair, my Hopes and Fears were equally balanced; no allowed or unrepented Crime pressed my Soul: Virtue had been my early, my deliberate Choice, the superior Design and governing Spring of all my Conduct: I hope I had made some Preparation for Death, and had often meditated on the serious Subject; but 'twas in the Hours of perfect

fect Health and Vivacity: I had never before groaned on a sick Bed; these Solemnities were new, and infinitely more awful than I had ever conceived.

DEATH threatened me now at a Disadvantage, in a Crisis of Folly, an unusual Disorder of Mind; Sickness and Pain gave every thing a gloomy Aspect, and heightened even natural Frailties into the blackest Guilt: while the grizzly Monarch stood insulting before me, and drew his sable Curtains round my Bed; but a superior Power rescued me from his ravenous Jaws, and bid me live, to speak my great Deliverer's Praise.

THIS Sickness has given me another Set of Thoughts; my Apprehensions of Dying are as different from what they were before, as the Evidence of waking Certainties are from the airy Illusions of a Dream: My Notions were once very gay and romantick; I fancied I should take my final Leave of the World with an exceeding good Grace, and bid adieu very sedately to all the Vanities beneath the Sun; till it came to a Trial, I was for making my Exit in the full Bloom of Youth, and quitting the Stage in the most becoming Manner. While the fatal Moment appeared at a Distance, I was delighted with such Images of Mortality as the Author of the following Verses has described, and with great Gayety repeated these Lines:

Indul-

*Indulgent Death, prepare thy gentle Dart,
 To strike a willing and unguarded Heart.
 Where are thy dreadful Looks and gloomy Train?
 Fantastick Mortals all these Terrors feign.
 Thou hast an Angel's Smile and heav'nly Grace;
 I find transporting Beauties in thy Face,
 And yield unforc'd unto thy cold Embrace. }
 I come a joyful Captive to thy Arms;
 This Moment has for me ten thousand Charms;
 For thee all human Things I here resign;
 My spotless Faith and Virgin Vows are thine.
 Mirtillo's Sighs, and Sylvia's Tears, in vain
 In these dull Regions would my Soul retain.
 Forbear your fruitless Grief, I go to prove
 Unbounded Pleasures, and immortal Love.
 'Oh let me unmolested close my Eyes;
 We'll meet again in yonder blissful Skies!*

*Young Virgins, haste, a flow'ry Wreath prepare,
 And dress with guiltless Ornaments my Hair;
 Adorn me with the Summer's painted Pride,
 And lay the Vestments of the Dead aside;
 Nor let a pensive Look, or mournful Tear,
 To cloud the Lustre of your Eyes appear:
 Each Nymph be dress'd in Robes of spotless White,
 The Foldings streaming far with silver Light:
 Let Smiles on all your lovely Faces shine;
 Nor at my glorious Destiny repine.
 With decent Joy conduct me to the Tomb,
 And hang your Garlands round the solitary Room.*

THIS

THIS is to expire in Heroicks, to give up the Ghost with a poetical Decorum, and to be interred *a la Mode d'Arcadia*. Such Sentiments as these may pleasingly amuse the Mind in the Hours of Health and Serenity; but it requires a Strength superior to all human Fortitude, to support the Soul in the Agonies of Separation: there the Aids of Reason and Nature fail; only a Power Divine can disperse the fatal Gloom, and brighten it into celestial Day. — This long Letter is owing to your own Curiosity; and must be the Excuse of,

MADAM,

Yours, &c.

SYLVIA.



LET-



L E T T E R VI.

To LETICIA; giving an Account of the Death
of AMANDA.



AM just return'd from paying my last Ceremony to the Remains of the late beautiful *Amanda*: The surprizing State in which for several Weeks the Corps lay, the Richness of the Coffin, or the Pomp with which she was interr'd, could no way disguise from my Thoughts the melancholy Circumstances that attended the last Scene of her Life: I never think of the Manner of her Death, but a thousand Terrors rise in my Imagination, to reproach me for joining with the rest of her Flatterers, in concealing her Danger, and soothing her with Hopes of Recovery, 'till Death convinced her of the fatal Delusion.

ON this Subject, I hope you will give me Leave to be serious; my Youth, which you so often object against the Gravity of my Temper, is no Argument in this Case; the fair *Amanda* was still younger, and yet, after all her Bloom and Vivacity, I saw her a pale and senseless Carcass:

F

“ How

" How lately did this celebrated Thing

" Shine in the Box, and sparkle in the Ring!"

'Tis true, the mouldering Clay, by a stately Monument, is distinguish'd from vulgar Dust; but how poor a Consolation is that to an immortal Spirit, fated to endless Misery, or unbounded Joy!

You may laugh, and in poor wild Wit ridicule these solemn Reflections, and lampoon me with the Character of a Saint; but my dear *Leticia*, this Mirth would be more unseasonable and ridiculous than my Morals: However, I am more charitable than to accuse you of such Levity.

SINCE you have put me, by your own Commands, on this melancholy Account, I hope 'twill be for your Advantage, when you come to act the closing Part of Life.

I told you in my last Letter, the accidental Reason of being in the same House with *Amanda*, and her full Resolution not to go into the Country, however necessary it was for her Health; no Argument could prevail with her to quit the Amusements of the Town, in which she had always a Share, 'till the positive Order of her Physicians confined her from going abroad: Her Distemper was ling'ring, but incurable; this, in my hearing, the Doctor own'd to her elder Sister, in whose Family she was: He told us, that he thought two or three Months would be the utmost Limits of her Life; which he beg'd
might

might be conceal'd, and that we would keep her as chearful as possible: But the natural Gaiety of her Temper prevented that Care, for her Business was to get rid of Time and Leisure. She could not go to the Masquerade, but took care to let her Acquaintance know how welcome their Appearance, in every fantastick Disguise, would be in her own Apartment. She languish'd after the Delights of the Stage, but to supply that, Orders were given for some Farce or Comedy to be read for her Diversion: Sometimes a Game at Piquet pass'd away the tedious Moments; she has often kept the Cards in her Hands, 'till a swooning Fit interrupted the important Affair. This you will think was a pious Preparation for the last Change! A glorious manner of concluding the Action of Human Life!

HER Beauty was as much her Joy and Contemplation, as ever; she was exceeding pale, but there was a certain Elegance in her Features, and something so peculiarly charming in her Air, that triumph'd over her Indisposition; and to give a Flush to her Complexion, she had prevail'd with her Sister to change her Window-Curtains, which were Yellow Silk, for some of a bright Crimson: Her Toilet took up as much of her Time as her Strength would permit; the adjusting a becoming and modish Undress, would sometimes so exhaust her Spirits, that she was forced to pause, and leave the Mighty Task unfinished: 'Twas but two Days before she died, that she order'd the most fashionable *Desbaille* to

be sent for from *France*; as if she design'd to expire genteely, and appear polite, even in the Languishments of Death.

HER Sister, tho' many Years older, under the Influence of the same unhappy Education, indulg'd the Vanity of her Inclination in every Punctilio; whatever was the Consequence, the dying Fair must be diverted from every thing that was reasonable and serious: One would wonder her Invention could find such a Series of Impertinencies; Monkeys, Parrots, Buffoons, soft Musick, and tender Songs, were always ready to entertain every little Interval of Ease, or Strength, the poor unthinking Patient had.

THIS, to me, was the most melancholy Scene in the World: I have forced a Smile, when my Heart has been inwardly bleeding with Grief and Compassion: Not a Day past, but with Tears streaming from my Eyes, I importun'd *Marina*, to let her Sister know her Danger, and to send for a neighbouring Clergyman, of great Piety, sometimes to pray with her; and, at least, to acquaint her she was not immortal; that it was possible for her to die, as well as other People.

THIS Advice she rejected as positively, as if I had perswaded her to send for an Executioner, to dispatch her Sister into the next World: Then Madam, said I, at least forbear to distract, and hinder her, from every serious Reflection.

Serious Reflection, my dear EMILIA, (she reply'd), where have you learnt this Cant? How long have you practised that Saintly Air! Look in
the

the Glass, and see if you can forbear laughing at your self; would you have me put on that precise Look, and murder my Sister, by telling her that she has but a Month to live! It would infallibly throw her into the Agonies of Death: You cannot be so barbarous to give me this Advice! You know what Effect our pious Fraud had, of putting St. Austin's Meditations into her Hands, instead of Otway's Plays; the accidental opening it at a Meditation on Death, had almost thrown her into a Convulsion. But this (continued she) is the Effect of your strange Notions; you represent the Supreme Being in such a gloomy View, that it makes you perfectly superstitious: My Thoughts, I confess, are more light-some and free; I believe the Mercies of Heaven unbounded, and that there is nothing in these little Gaieties, offensive to God, or injurious to Man: Nor indeed is a future State of Punishment any Part of my Creed; I make no question, but my Sister will be insensible or happy whenever she dies, and it shall be my Business to make her so, the short Space she has to live, which may be a Month or two longer, by the Doctor's Conjectures, the last Visit he made. Come (added she) you must go with me, and endeavour to divert her; but pray put off that sanctify'd Aspect, and try to look a little more like an Inhabitant of this World.

I could not refuse attending her to *Amanda's* Apartment, whom we found in a musing, melancholy Posture; which to divert, *Marina* told her, she look'd exceeding well, and nothing could be more genteel than the *Desbaville*, in which she
ap-

appeared : This a little brighten'd the Chagrin on her Visage, and made her something attentive to the Pranks of a new Monkey, which her Page had just introduced to divert his fair Mistress ; who, in the midst of the Recreation, was seized with a fainting Fit, sunk back in an Easy Chair, and after a few Hours convulsive Pangs, gave up the Ghost.

I have been so particular in this Account, in hopes it will have a lasting Influence on your Conduct ; and by being faithful to my Living Friend, I may atone, if possible, for my Insincerity to the Dead. I have, a thousand and a thousand times, reproach'd myself, for not letting *Amanda* plainly know her Danger ; leaving the Event to Heaven, I am convinced 'twas my Duty, in spite of all the false Rules, by which the Friendship of the World is guided.

THESE two Sisters had the Misfortune, in their early Years, to lose their Mother, and were left to the Conduct of a Father, who made it his Pride to think and live freely ; he looked on all Religion as State Policy, and put the *Bible* and *Alcoran* on a Level : With these Principles he perverted his Daughters Minds, and except observing the strictest Forms of Honour and Reputation, they were govern'd by no Rule, but their Caprice and the Fashions of the Age. Thus they saw their Father live, and thus they saw him die, entirely negligent and thoughtless of any thing beyond the Period of Human Life : Instead of Prayers, and pious Meditations, one of his Libertine

bertine Companions read *Dryden's* Translation of *Lucretius* to him, in his last Hours; while fearless and insensible he met Death, and all its succeeding Horrors.

Amanda's Death has made a deep Impression on my Thoughts, I have bid the Modish World adieu, and am now retired to my Brother's Country Seat. You may call it the Spleen, but I hope 'tis the Effect of just reasoning, that I have never read any thing since I came here, but Books of Devotion, Mr. *Law's* excellent Treatise of Christian Perfection has been instructive to me: The Character of *Miranda* has raised a noble Emulation in my Mind, though I despair of reaching that Perfection.

If you make me a Visit, you will not find me engaged in Cards at One and Thirty, nor telling Riddles, or drawing *Valentines* with my Country Neighbours; but musing by the Side of a gentle Cascade, or sitting in some fragrant Bower, listening to the Songs of Heaven in Mr. *Watts's* pious Numbers:

" Hark! how beyond the narrow Bounds

" Of Time and Space they run,

" And speak, in most majestick Sounds,

" The Godhead of the Son:

" How on the Father's Breast he lay,

" The Darling of his Soul,

" Infinite Years before the Day,

" Or Heav'ns began to roll,

" And

*" And now they sink their lofty Tone,
" And milder Notes they play;
" And bring th' Eternal Godhead down,
" To dwell in humble Clay.*

If this long Letter should give you the Spleen,
I hope 'twill be your Advantage; nothing but
that is the Intention of

M A D A M,

Your most humble Servant,

EMILIA.



LET-



LETTER VII.

The ANSWER: To EMILIA.



OUR Letter, I hope, will be a Restraint on the great Levity of my Temper: The Account of *Amanda's* Death will leave me without Excuse, if I should carry my Vanity so far, as to act the last Part of Life, with so little Propriety. I cannot, without the warmest Gratitude to Heaven, reflect on the Advantage of a different Education and Principles, which, I hope, will never be effaced from my Soul.

BUT, my dear *Emilia*, I shall never be so good as you would have me, nor as I sincerely desire to be; I have yet some tender Engagements to break, before I bid adieu to the World, and rank myself in the Number of Departed Spirits: I cannot on a sudden contract such Intimacies with invisible Beings, as to abandon all my material Acquaintance. I despair of following you and *Miranda*, who, if you were Roman Catholicks, are in a fair way of being canonized (as many a miserable Sinner has been before you): Of whatever Religion I am, 'tis certain I shall never be numbered in the same Class with *St. Winifred*.

G

You

You love Poetry, and 'tis a Pleasure to me to oblige you with any thing writ on a Subject so agreeable to your Taste, as these Verses inscribed to Mrs. M——, a Person of strict Piety; though she does not turn Recluse, and live in a Grotto, but converses freely with the polite World, and keeps an unblemished Character in it. I'll leave you now to your shady Retreats, and murmuring Brooks.

On SOLITUDE:

Inscribed to Mrs. M——.

*Ye Groves, and flow'ry Vales, in you we find
The first unblemish'd Joys for Man design'd;
Your charming Scenes th' attentive Mind supply
With Pleasure in its nice Variety:
Nature does here her Virgin Smiles afford,
And shews us Paradise again restored;
Our Souls their former Harmony acquire,
And vexing Care, and conscious Guilt retire.*

*Propitious Solitude! thou kind Retreat
From all the vain Amusements of the Great!
In thee alone, without Disgust, we prove
The endless Sweets of Innocence and Love:
Beauty, and Wit, may find a Refuge here,
Unenvy'd ev'n Belinda might appear;
Each Nymph would yield the uncontested Prize,
And ev'ry Swain pay Homage to her Eyes.
Flourish ye gentle Shades, and rural Seats,
Let endless Verdure deck your soft Retreats;*

Peace

*Peace dwell upon your Banks, ye Silver Streams,
The Muses chaste Delights, and constant Themes;
For ever you the Poet's Breast inspire,
With sprightly Joys, and wake the Golden Lyre.*

*Retir'd in fragrant Bow'rs, the Hebrew King
For Pharaoh's Daughter, touch'd the tuneful String,
The fair Egyptian's Charms his Soul possess'd,
And fill'd with sacred Extacies his Breast;
Celestial Numbers melted from his Tongue,
In human Figures, Truths divine were sung,
While Lebanon's high Cedars lent an Ear,
And Siloe rose above its Banks to hear;
Hermon and Carmel, kept the pleasing Lay,
And Sharon's painted Vale appear'd more gay.*

*What Pow'r, enchanting Solitude, is thine!
That Men, for thee, the dearest Ties resign:
For thee the Monarch lays his Crown aside,
And the young Lover quits his weeping Bride,
The Hero gives the Chase of Honour o'er,
And Fame, and glorious Conquest, tempt no more;
The softer Sex, with fearless Piety,
To Woods and savage Wilds have follow'd thee.*

*Fair Magdalen, the flatt'ring World declin'd,
And to a narrow Cave her Charms confin'd:
In Herod's wanton Court, admir'd she shone,
And all the tempting Paths of Vice had known;
To her's, the Beauties of the Hebrew Race,
Rachel's and Tamar's boasted Fame gave place:
Love triumph'd in her Voice, her Looks, and Mien,
And Love in all her fatal Form was seen;*

*A thousand youthful Hearts her Pow'r obey'd,
 And Homage to her soft Dominion paid :
 But thus in Nature's gayest Bloom admir'd,
 A Penitent she gloriously retir'd ;
 Her costly Ornaments are laid aside,
 With all the vain Address of Female Pride ;
 Her Hair neglected, o'er her Bosom flow'd,
 And Charms beyond the Reach of Art bestow'd ;
 A mourning Robe she wore, a pensive Grace,
 And soft Remorse, sate on her lovely Face ;
 A vaulted Rock for her Retreat she chose,
 Among the Clifts a murmur'ing Fountain rose ;
 Here Contemplation, Pray'r, and lofty Praise,
 In solemn Order measured out her Days :
 To Heav'n her Vows with early Ardour fled,
 Before the Sun his Morning Glories spread ;
 When from his Height he pour'd down golden streams,
 Her wing'd Devotion met his Noon-day Beams,
 'Till in the West with fainter Light he shone,
 Untir'd the heavenly Votary went on :
 The Moon serene in Midnight Splendor sate,
 With countless Stars attending on her State ;
 The Cares and noisy Business of the Day,
 In Rest and soothing Dreams, dissolv'd away ;
 The drowsy Waters crept along the Shore,
 And Shepherds pin'd upon the Banks no more ;
 The Trees their Whispers ceas'd, the gentle Gale
 No longer danc'd along the dewy Vale,
 The peaceful Ecchoes, undisturb'd with Sound,
 Lay slumb'ring in the cavern'd Hills around,
 Faction, and Care, and Midnight Riot slept,
 But still the lovely Saint her holy Vigils kept.*

IF you could but find such a convenient Habitation as this, it would be to your Heart's Content : For my Part, I shall never hide my Virtue in Obscurity ; it shall not be my Fault, if the World is not instructed by my Example. But to be serious, I verily believe we have both the same important Interest in view, though we are so different in our Tempers ; we never meet but it puts me in mind of the two Weeping, and Laughing Philosophers. The very same Cause has often had the opposite Effect on our Dispositions ; but in spite of this seeming Contradiction, that sacred Amity by which we are united, shall never be violated by

M A D A M,

Your Obedient Humble Servant,

LETICIA.



L E T.



LETTER VIII.

To LETICIA, *in Answer to the foregoing Letter.*



IF you have heard of my Brother's Death, you can be no Stranger to the Excess of my Grief: The Poem you sent, came very seasonably; in the Fair Penitent I found a Plan of Life, suited to my melancholy Temper; which has found more Relief by a sort of visionary Consolation, than from all the Efforts of Reason; you have often thought fit to divert me with your sleeping, as well as waking Reveries, and I know I cannot oblige you more than by relating this uncommon Dream.

WHETHER it was the Excursion of Fancy, or whether the Scene was disposed by an Angel, I cannot determine: But as I was sitting in a Summer-House, my usual Retreat in an Afternoon, reading Milton's Elegy on *Lycidas*, a downy Slumber closed my Eyes, and sunk my Sorrows in the pleasing Oblivion.

I found myself in a Place, gay as the Poets Description of the Cyprian Groves; beneath an inviting Shade I rested, on a Bank of Violets, and without Surprise, saw my Brother in a glittering

tering Habit, and beautiful beyond the Race of Men, approaching: He seated himself by me, and with a Smile of celestial Charity thus began:

“ ’Tis with the highest Satisfaction, my dear Sister, I come to give you a Relation that will animate your Virtue. As you assisted mine in a State of mortal Imperfection, you know I had some Intervals of Doubt, and Nature shrunk at the Entrance of the gloomy Valley; the Darkness was untry’d and impenetrable: But how great was my Surprize, when I found this momentary Night succeeded by an eternal Noon! while my Guardian Angel, with an Aspect of ineffable Sweetness bid me follow him.

“ I obey’d; in an Instant the Earth was lost to my View, the Sun diminish’d to a Star; innumerable Worlds were past, with a Speed swifter than a Morning Ray; the Gates of Heaven now appear’d, and at the Angel’s Command, roll’d back on their Golden Hinges: But what Glories were disclosed, no Language on Earth can describe! Omnipotence and infinite Wisdom seem’d without Limits, here to have been exerted; thro’ enchanting Groves, I traced the delicious Borders, where the Fountains of Life pour out their Streams; passing from one Scene of Wonders to another, ardent to pay my Homage, I press’d forward to the sacred Throne.

“ Tho’ Supream Benignity at once beamed forth on me: Lost in Extasy, I fell prostrate
“ before

“ before my Sovereign, when with Accents that
“ breathed immortal Joy, and Harmony, he bid
“ me rise to perfect Purity and Bliss.

“ A Starry *Tiara* was placed on my Head, and
“ a Golden Lute in my Hand ; I mingled with
“ the Grand Assembly, the Thousand Times
“ Ten Thousand, ransomed from every Language
“ and Tribe on Earth : With them I joined my
“ grateful Tribute to the great Benefactor of
“ Mankind, whose Sufferings and Death had
“ given me Acceptance, Victory, and Life ; I
“ rejoiced in God my Saviour, I triumphed in
“ the Height of his Exaltation ; Infinite Maje-
“ sty softened by equal Love appeared in his
“ Form, the Brightness of the Divinity, the
“ Joy of Heaven, the Theme of every celestial
“ Song.

“ I have made this Impression on your sleep-
“ ing Imagination, being permitted to give you
“ no other Account of my Happiness : Be not
“ impatient of the Afflictions of Life, the whole
“ of your mortal Duration is but a Moment, to
“ the future Recompence ; if you live to the
“ Honour of your Maker, and the Advantage
“ of your Companions on Earth, it will for ever
“ heighten the Transports of your Joy in the
“ Realms of Light.

HERE with soft Melody the pleasing Scene
vanished : I waked at the imaginary Musick, and
found it had left a calm and sedate Composure in
my Soul ; like a Beam from Heaven it dispersed the
the

the Gloom, and opened a serene and lightfome Prospect before me.

—— Ye dreary Wastes adieu !
Reason, Religion, now I follow you.
Enough to Nature and the Grave are paid ;
Behold the fair Celestial Scene's display'd.

It appear'd too regular for the natural Excursion of Fancy, but I shall leave that undetermin'd ; amidst all your Gaeties, you are as guiltless of Incredulity as

Your Humble Servant,

EMILIA.



H

L E T-



LETTER IX.

The ANSWER, to EMILIA.



AM not surprized, that such a shining Vision as you have described, has allay'd your Grief, and restored the Tranquility of your Mind ; but I am afraid you are not yet gay enough, to excuse the Vivacity of my Temper, or suffer me to laugh : 'Tis without your Consent if I am happy, and very much pleased with any of the transitory Vanities of this World ; which, I must own, have some prevailing Charms for me, from whose soft Captivity I cannot yet get free.

I WAS last Night at a Play, in which there was the Part of a Princess well acted, and the Sentiments belonging to the Character were just and noble ; yet I was not half so well pleased, as I had often been before, with the same Representation ; I soon found the Reason of my Dissatisfaction, and the Difference between Imitated and Real Greatness.

THE *Princess Royal* was at the Play, and just in my View ; — All that Elegance and Dignity
of

of Thought, the Poet had described, brighten'd her Aspect; every Virtue was there conspicuous; the gentle, the engaging Smile, was beyond the reach of Numbers: A thousand nameless Graces discover'd the innate Perfections of her Mind, and gave the charming Princess a Distinction peculiar to conscious Merit, and beyond all Imitation.

I intend you a Visit before the Spring (that fairest Season of the Year) is past: I am willing to see you once more in this World, for I am not sure we shall meet in the next, though I sincerely desire it; nothing will more contribute to my Happiness than your Conversation; I catch some Emanation of your Virtue, and am inspired with new Convictions of the Vanity of the World; my Reason gains Ground, and my Passions subside. I may venture to look grave in your Company, but in my present modish way of Life, I dare not so much as put on an Air of Thought and Reflection, nor seem to have any thing in the Earth to do, but to amuse my self and the volatile Beings I converse with. You see if I was wiser than I really am, I should take Pains to conceal it, rather than be singular and unfashionable.

I have sent the Verses I promised to procure for you

On BEAUTY.

*Victorious Beauty! by what potent Charm
Dost thou the Soul of all its Force disarm!
We bless our Chains, abhor our Liberty,
And yield the uncontested Prize to thee:*

*Whether we rash or calm Designs pursue,
Thine is the glorious Motive still in View ;
For thee, we search the wide Creation round,
But thou art no where in Perfection found ;
Some Blemish still remains on mortal Pride,
And crowding Years its airy Boasts deride.*

*Triumphant Beauty sits in Flavia's Eyes,
But while we gaze, the trembling Lustre dies.*

*Bellair, compleatly form'd, with ev'ry Grace,
A faultless Shape, and an enchanting Face,
In all his Motions, each becoming Air,
Greatness and native Elegance appear ;
Careless and free, in Life's deluding Bloom,
While envious Death threatens a hasty Doom,
Some gentle Mistress, full of Love and Truth,
Shall soon lament the dear unrival'd Youth.*

*Thou lovely, fleeting, transitory Thing,
From what immense Perfection dost thou spring !
To what compleat Original return,
While we thy short Appearance vainly mourn !
How'er our doating Thoughts mistake the Way
To certain Bliss, thine is a friendly Ray,
That points the Passage to unclouded Day.* }

*Ye Heavenly Forms, in all your Pomp appear, }
And shew us what Immortal Beauties are, }
What Life, what rosy Bloom your Faces wear ! }
Put on each smiling Grace, and conq'ring Charm,
And all the Force of mortal Love disarm :*

For

Moral and Entertaining. 53

*For still our restless Thoughts take glorious Aims,
Howe'er seduc'd by these inferior Flames ;
The leading Passion, the supreme Desire,
To Things divine, and infinite aspire.*

*Eternal Excellence ! 'tis only Thee
We search, thro' Natures bright Variety :
Our eager Wishes, with impetuous Force
To thee unknown, direct their endless Course ;
'Tis thee we seek and love, for thee we pine,
The pow'rful Charm, the soft Attraction's thine ;
To thee these Sighs, these tender Vows ascend,
Th' unseen Divinity we still attend ;
Sick of these fading Toys, our Thoughts press on
To Joys untasted, Excellence unknown.*

*Thou Great Original of all that's Fair,
Whose Glories no Similitude can bear,
Before the darting Splendor of thy Eyes,
The Pride of all created Beauty dies !*

THIS I hope is the latent Sense of my Soul,
in all its Motions, tho' I am not yet so wise as
you would have me, nor as I intend to be ; but
in whatever Character you put me, do me the
Justice to believe, I am sincerely

Yours,

LETICIA.

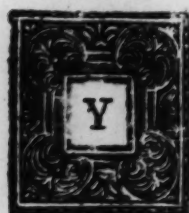
L E T-



LETTER X.

*From LYSANDER, giving a Relation of the
tragical End of his Valet-de-Chambre.*

My LORD,



OUR Commands shall be punctually obeyed, whatever Reluctance I find to enter on this Relation, of which you have been so imperfectly informed.

THE young *Valet-de-Chambre*, whose Story you enquire after, was the same I brought out of *France*, whom you took some notice of when I met your Lordship in my Return to *England*; where I was received again into my Mother's Family, my Father being in my Absence deceased.

I HAD a young Sister about fifteen, of whom I was always exceeding fond, and now thought it my Part to see her as advantageously married, as her Birth and Fortune required: After I had spent some Time at home, I proposed several good Matches for her, every one of which she obstinately refused.

THIS

THIS gave me some Suspicion of my *Valet*, who appeared to be a handsome Youth about eighteen: He had a charming Voice, and sung to a Lute, which he touched with surprizing Skill and Sweetness. My Sister loved Musick, and he was always ambitious of entertaining her. There was no Difficulty to discover her Inclinations, Truth and Nature appeared in all her Actions; but *Palanty's* Conduct was past my Penetration: However, I resolved to part with him, to prevent my Sister's Infamy; as dissolute and abandoned as my own Manners had been, I had the nicest Sense of what would touch her Reputation. With a restless Mind I was one Day walking in my Garden, and turning with some Precipitation down a shady Alley, I surprized *Palanty* reading a Paper; which suddenly snatching from him, convinced me of my Sister's Folly.

I TOOK the Opportunity immediately to dismiss him; and seeing me resolved, he fell on his Knees, intreating me not to expose a Stranger in a foreign Country; confessing the whole Truth, that she was an unhappy Woman, the *Cardinal* of B——'s Niece, who, governed by the Dictates of her Affection, had followed me in that Disguise.

THIS she told me with a Face unstained with a rosy Blush, or the least Appearance of that modest Disorder so natural and becoming her Sex: My Confusion was much greater than hers; and yet one would not think me over bashful,

nor

nor extremely scrupulous with regard to my Character. Her Impudence made me almost suspect the Truth of what she told me ; but I was not in an inquisitive Humour, and cared not what she was if I had never been embarrassed with her : I had seen her Face too often to find any Charm of Novelty in it ; the Passion she pretended for me was a Mystery, when I remembered she had been without Constraint a Witness, as well as Pimp, to many of my criminal Amours.

HOWEVER, as I was now without Anxiety for my Sister, this artful Woman, by her Importunities, prevailed on my easy Temper to let her stay in the Family, till she could find some other Settlement. She staid ; and in some Moment of Darkeness seduced me to her Ruin, and my own Infamy : She was with Child ; I got Lodgings for her, and pretending some Disgust, dismissed her as a *Valet* ; my Mother and Sister being intirely ignorant of the Disguise of her Sex.

IN the mean time my Mother, who took the Chagrin of my Temper for a Reformation of Manners, was very solicitous with me to conclude a Marriage she had proposed to a young Woman of great Merit, and a very agreeable Person. I pursued the Affair but coldly, and in mere Complaisance to a most indulgent Parent ; till, by frequent Conversation with this charming Woman, she engaged me by all the Ties of Reason and virtuous Love : The Modesty of her Behaviour, joined to the most sincere and obliging Temper in the World, secured her Empire ;

pire; her Wit was sparkling and inoffensive, Deceit and Malice were Strangers to her Breast; a thousand nameless Beauties appeared in all her Conduct: Till now I never knew the Force of Love, nor any of the refined Sentiments that noble Passion inspired. In what guiltless Joys did the Hours pass that I spent with my loved *Cimene*!

BUT what Tongue can express the Anguish I felt from my criminal Affair with *Palanty*! I was forced to visit her, for fear she should divulge the Secret, in Revenge, and ruin me with the charming *Cimene*. You are a Stranger, my Lord, to these Vexations; your whole Conduct has been governed by the Rules of Honour and Reason: Oh may my worst Enemy never know the Curse of an Engagement with a lewd, imperious Woman! Fear kept me a Slave to her Caprice, and forced me to endure all the Insolence, and Rage of Language, she had practised in her masculine Habit among her Inferiors; nor durst I offer to controul her expensive Vanity, being willing to soften her, till she was past the dangerous State she was now in.

BUT no Consideration could make me delay my intended Marriage, let the Event be what it would; the Day was set that Heaven, in *Cimene*, gave me the greatest Blessing of my Life: The News was soon spread, and reached *Palanty*'s Ears; who procured a deadly sleeping Draught, and, unsuspected by those about her, desperately swallowed it, and slept her last; leaving a Paper

on her Toilet, with an Account who she was, and her Adventure with me.

THIS Accident was soon told to my Mother; who was lost in Sorrow, till I assured her, *Palmy* had imposed on my Ignorance by her Habit, until a few Months before I dismissed her; and that by her Artifice, and not my own Inclination, I had been ensnared into this Misfortune: As much a Rake as I had been, I could not but have a secret Aversion to a Woman of that dissolute Character. But the Infamy of this tragical Event has justly fallen on me, since in all my other Intrigues I had been the Seducer, and too often triumphed in the Spoils of unguarded Innocence.

THE lovely *Cimene*, to whom I had been but two Days married, instead of betraying any female Weakness, with Peace in her Looks, and Persuasion in her Tongue, endeavoured to compose the Grief and Distraction with which she found this infamous Event had filled my Thoughts. In her calm and unruffled Temper I saw the Privilege of a spotless Life, and a Mind unclouded with Guilt; free from uneasy Reflexions on what was past, or restless Expectations of what was to come.

THIS is just the Reverse of my Condition; the unhappy End of this miserable Woman, the double Murder of herself and unborn Infant, the Share I have had in her Misfortunes, has brought my former Crimes in their blackest Shape to my Remembrance.

*'Tis conscious Guilt's the Emphasis of Hell,
Were all but Fables else, the Priesthood tell.*

LIKE Furies, the Ghosts of my past Sins start up, and terrify my restless Imagination; my Debauches, Quarrels, licentious Amours, pass in a confused Succession before me: This is what secretly blasts my Joys, when to the World they appear in their full Bloom.

'Tis not a Month since my softest Wishes were crowned in the Possession of the charming *Cimene*; I am yet surrounded with the Congratulations of my Friends on the happy Occasion; every other Circumstance of Life seems to conspire to my Satisfaction. You will ask me, my Lord, Why I am not easy and thankful in this Circle of earthly Enjoyments? What is the Hindrance? Where is the Obstacle?

'Tis Guilt! 'tis conscious Guilt! What was the Matter with the first bold Transgressor? why did he run to the Thickets to cover him? why shelter himself among the Trees of *Eden*? what could make him fly that gracious Presence, at which innocent Nature smiled, the new Creation bloomed afresh, and the Morning Stars rejoiced? Why is he fearful in the Cool of the Evening, who at the Dawning of the same Day knew no such Passion? What has made this sudden Alteration? Some mighty Change must be within, for all without is the same. Is he not in Paradise, surrounded with all the Pleasures of Sense; the

warbling Musick of the Groves to delight his Ear; to charm his Sight, the gay Creation unfolds its various Beauties; the Flowers breathe ambrosial Fragrance to cheer him, the balmy Air is yet unruffled by Tempests, the Sun shines in its original Splendor, and Nature stands dressed in all her primæval Perfection! The Man is in exact Temperament formed for Immortality, and just warm from his Great Creator's Hands, from whom, with wild Amazement, now he flies, and seeks the Covert of the Woods for Shelter.

THIS was all the Effect of Guilt, that secret Wound that bleeds within! You will excuse my dwelling so long on this melancholy Theme, when I tell you, 'tis some Relief to that Anguish which is a Secret to all the World but your Lordship: I am well acquainted with your Compassion and Fidelity, and am going to make a farther Trial of them, by a Relation which will surprise you. I will not exact your Belief, nor enter into the Reason and Philosophy of it; nor will I presume to contradict it, should you tell me I am distracted, that all I am going to discover is the Effect of Frenzy; as it was but a momentary Appearance, I will assert nothing: But as I was indulging my melancholy Temper, in the Retreat of a Summer-House, sitting very late in a pensive Posture, leaning on a Table, a pale sulphureous Gleam of Light appeared, that seemed to hover round a Form resembling *Palantý's*; who with a rueful Aspect, dressed in the Habilliments of the Dead, stood before me, and with

an Air of unutterable Anguish laid this Letter on the Table by me, and immediately vanished. I should think this no more than a Dream, if the Paper had not been real. The dreadful Contents are as follow :

TO LYSANDER.

I am now convinced, by a terrible Demonstration, of those Truths I once denied ; to my Cost I find that Hell is no poetick Fiction, no enthusiastick Dream, nor pious Fable of some mercenary Priest : This was the Language of my Impiety, when I followed you in an impudent Disguise ; and to support my masculine Character, acted the Atheist, by ridiculing all that was sacred, till I was given up of Heaven to the strongest Delusion, and the most daring Infidelity.

Thus abandoned, I swallowed the deadly Potion, with a full Presumption of mingling with my native Dust, and being insensible for ever : But the Instant Death had closed my Eyes, and laid his icy Hand on my Heart, a Scene altogether new and surprising opened before me ; the just unembodied Soul, in the Height of Astonishment, would fain have shrunk back again into its late warm Habitation, from whence I had violently forced it : the Attempt was vain ; the Avenues of mortal Life were for ever shut, and I found myself the Derision of those malignant Spirits, who had been my Seducers to this unnatural Fact.

What Execrations did I not utter against myself and them ! I had indulged the Rage, and practised the Language of Hell in my mortal State ; but
here

here all was fruitless and unfeared; I was the Captive of those infernal Ministers, who waited to conduct me to the Frontiers of eternal Night: I cast my Eyes to the heavenly Luminaries, and the full blazing Sun, whose Light I was to lose for ever; I bid adieu to the fair Creation, whose Almighty Former I had denied; I cast my Eyes to the sparkling Gates of Bliss, and with infinite Anguish found them shut against me, and hurried far through Chaos and primæval Darknefs (far from the Limits of celestial Day) I reached my destined Habitation; a dismal Region, waste and wide, of which no Mortal can form a Conception, nor find a Name for half its Terrors.

Oh! fly the Paths that lead to these mournful Abodes. As I have been in my mortal State the Instrument of Hell to entice you to Sin, your Perdition would vastly aggravate my own Misery; and I am suffered to warn you, as the rich Libertine in the Gospel would have warned his Brethren, that you come not to this Place of Torment.

I must no farther reveal the Secrets of the Deep, but am commanded back to the Seats of impenetrable Night and endless Despair! PALANTY.

THAT this Letter was left on the Table, writ in a Character exactly like Palanty's, is Fact; whether the rest was real or imaginary, I dare not decide.

Your Lordship's, &c.

LYSANDER.

LET-



LETTER XI.

*Letter the Second, to my Lord ******, from
LYSANDER.

My LORD,



YOU are entirely at your Liberty to reject the Relation I sent you; I never intended to make your Belief in Ghosts and Apparitions a Test of your Christianity; that stands on a more sure Foundation, and has all the Evidence of Reason and Miracles to support it: I am an Instance of its Divine Power, by which I am transformed from the brutal to the human Nature: I can now glory in that Privilege I lately despised, and without Vanity claim the Dignity of a reasonable Creature.

My Penitence was sincere, and found Acceptance from Heaven: The sacred Illumination, scattered the Gloom of Guilt and Despair, while in gentle Whispers the eternal Spirit breathed Pardon, Peace, and heavenly Benedictions to my Soul; I felt the powerful Influence, the Flames of celestial Love were kindled, My Fears vanished like Clouds before the Morning Sun.

“ ALL

“ ALL hail (I cried) ye unknown Delights,
 “ ye unexperienced Pleasures! compared to you
 “ what are my past Enjoyments! what are all
 “ the Amusements of Sense! I never lived till
 “ now; I knew no more than the Name, the
 “ Shadow of Happiness; but now I wake to
 “ Life, and taste the Joys of Angels.

I hope, my Lord, you will not think these the Flights of Imagination: You that have always believed the Articles of Religion, and kept its bright Rewards in View, can reflect on such Subjects more calmly; but to me these glorious Truths are all Novelty and Surprise. If a Wretch from his Infancy had been kept in a gloomy Dungeon, and just delivered from that dark Confinement, with what Transports would he salute the great Luminaries of Heaven, while one that from his Birth had been blessed with their Beams would meet them without Emotion?

THESE important Subjects engage my whole Attention; the Creation wears new Beauties, wherever I cast my Eyes, I meet Impressions of the Divinity; I trace his Footsteps among the silver Rills, and invoke him in the silent Grove: You know my poetick Humour, by too many loose Composures; but my Muse is now consecrated, and in some sylvan Retreat often assists my Evening Devotion.

PERMIT me, my Lord, to repeat my last Invocation to the heavenly Power.

Descend,

*Descend, celestial Spirit, from above,
 The uncreated Source of Light and Love!
 Perpetual Calms, and sweet Security,
 Concord, and graceful Order, wait on thee;
 Decay, and Death, thy quick'ning Rays exclude;
 And springing Nature smiles, by thee renew'd;
 Darkness, and wild Confusion soon retire
 Before thy clear, illuminating Fire;
 To gentle Thoughts thou dost our Bosoms move,
 And breath'st the soft melodious Soul of Love.*

*Oh Thou! who mad'st the new Creation bloom
 With active Life, and quick'ning Virtue come!
 Come, like the silent Fall of Ev'ning Dews,
 Whose Moisture all the flow'ry Field renews;
 Breath on me; like the sweet Sabeen Gale,
 That fans with rosy Wings the verdant Dale;
 Smooth as the gliding Musick, that controuls
 Each human Care, and steals upon our Souls;
 In Triumph, with the heav'nly Train descend
 Of Loves, and Graces, which on Thee attend!*

*In silent Shades, by some clear Fountain's Fall,
 Thou oft hast answer'd to a Mortal's Call;
 Oft in some artless Cave, or humble Cell,
 Thou with the Sons of Men hast deign'd to dwell;
 And left behind the high celestial Seats,
 To visit Mortals, in their low Retreats.
 When holy Vows, thy kind Descent invite,
 Thou hear'st the gentle Whispers with Delight;*

K

While

*While Nature tir'd, her midnight Sabbath keeps,
And ev'ry Thought, but pure Devotion, sleeps :
The smiling Stars roll on, the dazzling Moon,
In Pomp advances to her silent Noon;
While thy sweet Voice, soft as the midnight Air,
Dispels the Gloom of ev'ry earthly Care,
Unfolding boundless Prospects of Delight,
Before the piercing, intellectual Sight.*

*Beneath the sacred Mount, by thee inspir'd,
The Hebrews glorious Leader, sat retir'd;
The new-made World, and Eden's blooming Pride,
In various Scenes before him lay descry'd.*

*Oh princely Swain, how didst thou then despise
Th' Egyptian Court ! how worthless in thy Eyes !
What were the Grandeurs of a Royal Fate,
To the Distinctions of thy present State !
While Paradise, in all its charming Views,
For Thee, the great creating Voice renews ;
For Thee, again the Morning Stars rejoice,
Again for Thee, they raise the tuneful Voice ;
The Sons of God, touch the melodious Lyre,
And all the wide Creation join the Choir.*

*Lead me, propitious Spirit, lead me far,
Where I no more, the Voice of Man may hear :
You charming Visions, how you fire my Soul,
And ev'ry Thought of earthly Things controul !
Thro' what enchanting Paths, what flow'ry Ways
My Fancy led, with boundless Freedom, strays !
Reveal'd*

*Reveal'd, the Avenues of Pleasure lie,
And open wide the crystal Portals fly;
Immortal Beauty smiles, angelick Pow'rs,
In soft Responses, sing from rosy Bow'rs.*

You will not blame me, being got here, if I have no Inclination to descend: But Mortality will prevail; I sink to my native Element again; where as long as I am confined, believe me to be

Your Lordship's

Most obliged, humble Servant,

LYSANDER.





LETTER XII.

The Sequel of the Story of ROSELLA, in the last Letter of the First Part of Letters Moral and Entertaining.



WHEN I was in the West four Years since, I wrote you Word, that I had made an Acquaintance in a Family, who lived in a little Retirement at the Foot of a Hill, a few Miles from my House. I then gave you an Account of the Piety and Beauty of those exemplary Recluses, and owned that I had not at that time forgot the Charms of *Melissa*; but I did not tell you, that they had made an Impression on me, which could never be erased by all the modish Schemes of Interest and Alliances, nor could that darling (but mistaken) Notion of Liberty, hold me out against the Desire I had to call her mine, and make her so by the strongest and happiest Ties, those of Marriage: I struggled with my own Heart, and would fain have terrified it, by the Laugh I should raise among my Acquaintance, when they heard that I, in the gayest Bloom of Life, and with Four thousand Pounds a Year

a Year at my Command, should leave all the fashionable Maxims of Mankind, and fall in love with a young Woman, who had only Beauty, and the Sanctity of her Manners to recommend her: For though her Birth is Noble, she has only Three thousand Pounds; which I design to present to *Honor*a her Mother, the Day after our Marriage, which will be solemnized as soon as my Lawyer can finish a Deed; by which I give *Melissa* a Thousand Pounds a Year Rent-Charge for her Life, in case she should survive me.

Now I have told you my Happiness, I cannot help making you acquainted with *Rosella's*, whose Story you often said touched you. I went to the House of *Honor*a the Day after I came hither (for now it was my only Business) as soon as I alighted, a clean Footman, in a Frock turned up with Green, took my Horse: I expected from this to find an Alteration in the Family (for when I was there first, they had no Livery-Servant) as soon as I came into the Hall, I saw a beautiful young Man, whose Dress was entirely plain; his Hair hung in natural Curls without any Powder, and his Air and Appearance seemed to suit with the Simplicity and Elegance of the other Inhabitants of that happy Dwelling. *Rosella* was sitting by a Table, and had a Boy of about fourteen Months old in her Lap, rosy and smiling as a Cherubim, who was playing with some Flowers with which *Melissa* was going to dress a Bason: *Rosella* immediately rose, and coming towards me, desired I would give her

Leave

Leave to present her Husband *Alonzo* to me: I was rejoiced at the Sound, and congratulated her upon the Change of her Fortune, in a manner that might convince her how sincerely I shared in all that related to her. The lovely *Melissa* seemed glad to see me, and ran to call *Honor**a* with an obliging Haste. After a few Compliments were over, I enquired what had produced the Alteration I saw: *Honor**a* told me, that about two Years and a half ago, *Alonzo's* Father fell dangerously ill, and that he expressed an ardent Desire to see his Son; upon which his Wife wrote to a Nephew she had in *London* (who was the most intimate Friend *Alonzo* had upon Earth) in hopes that he might possibly be acquainted with the Place of his Retreat; and begg'd of him, if he knew how to direct a Letter, that he would write, and desire him to come and see his dying Father. The Nephew immediately dispatched an Express to *Alonzo*, who was retired into a little Village in *Lancashire*, where he boarded in the House of an old Clergyman, who had no other Family than himself and his Wife, and who were glad to have *Alonzo* with them, as he appeared a modest, sober young Man, for their Circumstances were too plentiful to want the Advantage of a Boarder. He immediately left the old People, and came home about four Days before the Death of his Father; who was transported at the Sight of him; nor did he feel less Joy, when his Mother assured him that *Montanor* (for that was his Father's Name) had, for many

many Months before his Illness, lived a very penitent, regular Life.

As soon as I heard of *Alonzo's* Return, I wrote him a Letter, in which I desired to see him as soon as *Montanor's* Funeral was over, but forbade him to come till that time: He complied with me in that Request, as he has ever since done, in all that I desired of him. About six Weeks after *Rosella* and he were married, I begged him to let me enjoy the Company of my Daughter while I lived in this solitary Habitation; for I could not think of leaving it; and we have passed our Time ever since in the most perfect Harmony. I cannot deny him the Justice of acknowledging to his Face, that we are not only happier in our Retirement than we were before, by the Addition of a chearful Companion, but edified and improved by the Piety of his Life. *Alonzo* seemed out of Countenance at this Part of her Discourse; and the Modesty with which he received it, shewed how much he deserved the Praise she gave him. She continued to tell me, that about four Months after he married *Rosella*, he received a Letter from the Lawyer in the Village where he had boarded, to let him know, that a few Weeks ago the Clergyman with whom he had lived, had buried his Wife, and about a Fortnight after fell himself ill of the same Fever, and died; that he had by his Will left *Alonzo* his Estate, which was about an Hundred and eighty Pounds a Year; and Two thousand Pounds in Money; which, added to about Two hundred and

fifty Pounds a Year, and some Money, which his Father left him, makes their Fortune very easy.

HERE *Honor**a* ended her Discourse, and it was so late that they desired me to stay Dinner; after which I asked to speak with her alone, and told her, I begged I might have Leave to propose my self to *Melissa*, if her Heart were not already engaged. *Honor**a* assured me it was not, and seemed surpris'd at a Proposal so much to *Melissa*'s Advantage; but told me, she begged I would endeavour to get *Melissa*'s Consent without her interposing her Authority; since she could not resolve, even in so advantageous a Thing, to force her Inclination. When I nam'd it to the young Beauty, she did not at first seem averse to any thing but the leaving of her Mother, which the Smallness of her House would oblige her to: But after a few Days, the Nearness of my House, reconcil'd her to that Scruple; and I had the Joy to find, that Inclination had a greater Share than Interest in her Compliance. Rejoice with me, *Lysander*; my Happiness in your Alliance will not end at my Death; the Conversation I shall now enjoy will fit me for eternal Rewards. I will make no Apology to you for the Sallies of my Pleasure, which will let me talk to you of nothing but my own Affairs. *Adieu.*



L E T T E R X I I I .

T O S E R E N A .

My dear S E R E N A ,

S I have always made you the Confident of whatever has related to me, I cannot help giving you an Account of the Pleasure and Pain occasioned by an Acquaintance I have made with a young Woman since I came hither: She was only Daughter to a Man who had been formerly an Officer in the *English* Army; but quitted it in Discontent, and came hither with *Semantke* his Daughter, to treat with some People about a Project of working in some Mines, which are believed to have many large Veins of Silver in them.

Semantke came to see me upon my Arrival; I found so much Wit and good Nature in her Conversation, that we contracted a great Intimacy, and were continually together: She had every Qualification that could make her Company entertaining; she sung, played on the Harpsicord, painted in Water-Colours, and had a surprizing Genius for Poetry; her Sentiments on all Sub-

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jects

jects seemed just and noble: I thought my self the happiest Person in the World, in finding a Companion so instructive and agreeable.

SHE told me the Story of her past Life; which described in her charming Language, still raised my Esteem; in every Occurrence I had the Pleasure to find she practised the highest Rules of Justice and Benevolence, and though now in the early Part of her Life, she was guided by the nicest Rules of Virtue: By a Passion she had for a Person by whom she was equally beloved, I was confirmed of the Prudence of her Conduct; I found that no Partiality or Tenderneſs could tempt her, to deviate from the severest Principles of Modesty and Honour.

I WAS not at rest till I had poured out all the Secrets of my Heart to her; which I did without the least Reserve; and trusted her with a Secret of the greatest Importance, to my future Tranquillity—but what is human Dependence—I found the inmost Secrets of my Soul betrayed, by the Person in whom I had so intirely confided.—I knew not how to behave my self in this Perplexity—I had too much Compassion for my fallen Friend to give her the Pain, and Confusion, of hearing my Reproaches; and too much Sincerity, to continue my Intimacy with her: But for my own Security, I was forced to break off all further Commerce, with one, of whose Guilt I had the utmost Certainty.

THIS is a very sensible Affliction to me, in a Place where I have so few Acquaintance; and am
not

not in a Temper, to contract any new Friendship. I could as soon have questioned my own Existence, as *Semantke's* Truth: and now, tho' I cannot acquit her, I am perpetually endeavouring to mitigate her Crime: I tell my Heart, her Error did not proceed from any Malignity in her Nature, but a too great Confidence in some other Friend; that she as well as I has been deceived, and only told my Secrets where she thought she might safely have trusted her own: I am ready to melt into Tears whenever I think of her, and find more Compassion than Anger, on reflecting on her Conduct; though I no longer converse with her, 'tis more to make her sensible of her Guilt, in betraying a Trust of Importance, than to shew my own Resentment; I shall be for ever interested in her Welfare: and if my Prayers have any Force, she will live, to wear off every Failing, that can cast a Blemish on a Mind, capable of arriving at as great a Degree of Perfection, as human Nature is capable of.

I HAVE wrote my self into too melancholy a Humour, to say any more, but that I am

Yours,



ISABELLA.



LETTER XIV.

*From MELINDA, giving an Account of her
Concealment.*

My dear ORIANA,



TOLD you before I left my Brother's House, that you should hear from me as soon as I was settled; and that I would inform you of the Reason of my Flight: You have too much Candour and Charity to judge harshly of my Proceedings; which could you see my Heart, you would rather pity, than condemn me for.

You have often, within these two last Years, observed an Alteration in my Temper, and Person: I am no more the sprightly florid Creature, that you used to call the Emblem of Health, and Chearfulness; you saw the Change, but did not guess the Cause was a Secret, hopeless Passion. I was at a Play, in the Pit: I saw one of the most agreeable Persons in the World: His Dress, his Behaviour, every thing was graceful and easy: The Tragedy of *Cato* was acted; he was attentive, and seemed to enter into every noble Senti-

Sentiment, where either the Hero, or Lover was described : His Aspect wore the visible Characters of Fortitude, and Virtue : He stood up between the Acts, and turned towards the Box where I sat; and when I went out, he made way for me through the Crowd : But I never after saw him in any publick Place ; nor knew who, nor what he was : But the charming Youth had made an Impression on my Thoughts, which had soon a very happy Effect : I grew weary of the noisy tumultuous way of living in my Brother's House ; and refused sharing in the constant Round of Diversions that my Sister loved : nor could there be any thing more dissolute and extravagant, than the Manners of this Family : Assemblies, Balls, Gaming — all Sorts of Riots and Licentiousness : I never indeed approved these Entertainments, and was always uneasy, without knowing how to make my self otherwise.

THE Paths to Happiness, that Religion proposed, I was as ignorant of, as the savage *Americans*, in their native Groves. *Dumain*, who married my Sister, was a professed Libertine ; My Parents left me very young to their Care ; my Sister being many Years older than I am : And if my Godfathers, and Godmothers, instead of renouncing the Poms, and Vanities of the World, for me in my Baptism, had solemnly vowed, I should be bred in the midst of those Snares, and seducing Temptations, they could not more effectually have discharged their Trust, than by placing me in this Family ; whose *Sundays*

day's Amusement was Cards : For we never went to Church, unless in a Frolick to spend an idle Hour, in Whispering, or Laughing.

However, my Guardian Angel did not quit his Charge ; but by the Impression of a virtuous Love, fortify'd my Soul from every loose Inclination : I fled Diversions, grew fond of Retirement ; this soon gave me a Habit of Thinking : And if I had Schemes of Happiness, they were all in some future Life beyond the Grave ; but my Notions were clouded and imperfect : Indeed I believed there was a God, and the Reproaches of my own Reason taught me to fear him ; but I had never look'd in the Bible, since I learn'd to read, and was as ignorant of Christianity, as a young *Hottentot* bred in a Cave.

My pensive Temper now detested Vanity, in every Appearance ; Plays and Novels no more diverted me : But wanting something to read, I saw a Bible in the Room, where my Sister's Woman lay, and opening it, my Attention was immediately engaged. The History was new to me : I carried it into my Chamber ; but how was I surpris'd, to find the Life and Precepts of the great Founder of the Christian Faith, so different from the Manners and Principles of those who assumed that sacred Profession : I found myself in the flow'ry Paths of Ruin, nor knew how to extricate myself from the fatal Snare : This was the secret Language of my Soul, to that invisible Power which knew its Sincerity :

Thou

*Thou Ruler of the Sky, Almighty Name,
 Whose piercing Eye discerns my rising Thoughts,
 E'er they are form'd within my anxious Breast ;
 Thou seest my Soul struggling to break the Bands,
 Which thus detain her Captive to the Earth :
 Thou seest how vainly she would soar on high,
 Passion and Pleasure clogg her downy Wing,
 Prevent her Flight, and sink her to the Dust :
 There low she lies, and trembling begs thy Aid,
 Conscious how impotent she is without Thee.*

My Sister soon perceived the Alteration of my Temper, and used her Art to engage me in some criminal Diversion ; but in vain, I was sick, and tired of these Extravagancies. But what could I do, my Fortune was lost in the *South-Sea* ? I was dependant on *Dumain's* and my Sister's Charity ; and to heighten my Distress, I was importuned by my Lord —— (who was lately married) to yield to his criminal Passion. At this Proposal I started with Horror, but could not shun his Address without quitting this disorderly Family ; which I resolved to do, and cast myself on the Protection of Heaven.

I left my Brother's House just after Dinner, and went in a Hackney Coach, to a Woman in the City that had been my Nurse : I engaged her to Secrecy, and got her to enquire for a Place in some Merchant's Family ; she soon succeeded, and introduced me to the Wife of an *East-India* Merchant, who lived in great Splendor. My
 Business

Business was to wait on her in the Station of a Chamber-Maid : She was very handsome, modest and unaffected : The Orders of the Family were so regular and peaceful, so perfectly the Reverse of my Brother's, that I thought myself in another World, and among a new Set of Beings : Temperance and Sobriety, reign'd amidst the Height of Plenty and Liberality. The Rooms were noble, and furnished with all the Riches of the *Indian* World, and look'd like the Palace of some Eastern Monarch.

I found my self perfectly at Ease, dressing my Mistress was all I had to do ; which was a very agreeable Employment, and soon dispatch'd : She had something so genteel in her Manner, that every thing look'd graceful and becoming on her, and cost but little Trouble to make it set well : Her Conversation was innocent and instructive ; her Hours spent in Reading, or some little Amusement with her Needle, without the least Inclination to rambling after Balls or Masquerades.

I spent two or three Weeks in this regular Manner, my Mistress treating me almost on a Level : I had not yet seen my Master, who now return'd from his Country House ; but my dear *Oriana*, think what was my Affliction, when I discover'd that he was the same lovely Youth I had seen at the Play. As soon as he saw me, he turn'd as red as Crimson, and I as pale as Ashes : He pass'd by me, and went immediately into my Mistress's Room : It was almost two Years since I had seen him, and I had some Hopes I was forgot :

got : However, I resolved to quit the Family, if I found he knew me ; or that my Friendship for his Wife, did not extinguish my Passion — On my Master's Part I soon found Reason to be easy ; I hardly ever saw him ; he was either at the *Exchange*, or when at Home, engaged in a Series of beneficent Actions. His Wealth was immense, which he dispersed with an unequalled Generosity : He assisted honest Traders, that had but a small Stock, paid the Debts of Prisoners, relieved the Widow, and redress'd the Injured and Oppressed : This was every Day's Business, which yet never intrench'd on his Hours of Devotion, in Private or Publick.

I now grew easy ; a Man of this Character was not like to indulge a guilty Flame in his own Breast, or to flatter it in mine : Besides, his Absence would soon relieve me, for he intended to go to the *Indies*, with the Fleet which was to set Sail within a Month.

THE Time was now expired ; the Day before he went his Voyage, after he had been an Hour with my Mistress, in some private Conversation, he left her, and came directly into my Room, with such an Air of Benignity in his Face, as some heavenly Minister would wear, who brought a Message of Peace.

HE began ; “ You will be surprized, Madam,
 “ to find I know your Family, and the Reason
 “ you have put yourself into the Protection of
 “ mine : The first Sight I had of you at the
 “ Play, made an Impression, which was never
 M “ effaced,

“ effaced, ’till I gave my Vows to the best of
“ Wives ; ’tis with some Confusion I own the
“ Wrong I did your Virtue, when I tell you
“ nothing should have prevented my Pursuit of
“ the Passion you first raised, but the Scandal of
“ the House you was in ; which was so extrava-
“ gant, that it forbid me ever thinking of you ;
“ but I now do you entire Justice, and admire
“ that Triumph of Honour, that put you in a
“ Station so low, to secure your self from the
“ Temptation of returning to your Brother : I
“ have left you ten Thousand Pounds in Bank
“ Bills, and have told your Case (as I had it
“ from the Woman that nurs’d you) to my
“ Wife, who has all the Virtues that ever
“ adorned the Sex : She yielded to this Proposal
“ with Transport ; and waits while I am gone
“ to deliver the Bills.” He said this, and left
me without Time or Language, to speak my
Gratitude.

My Mistress immediately came into the Cham-
ber, with Goodness shining in her Eyes, and
gave me the Bank Bills, with a Grace, which
only Virtue can stamp on human Actions : She
prevented my Thanks, by making an Apology for
her Ignorance of my Quality, assuring me, the
House was entirely at my Command : And the
Hopes of my staying with her, was the greatest
Satisfaction she proposed in her dear *Henry’s* Ab-
sence. — I could not possibly discover my Sense
of this surprising Benefit, by all the Force of
Language — my Silence, and the Tenderneſs in-

to which she saw my Soul was melted, was the only Evidence of Gratitude I could now give.

IN the Morning, when every thing was ready for the parting of the *East-India* Fleet, my generous Benefactor, came into his Wife's Chamber, to take his last Adieu: I was with her, endeavouring to give that Consolation my self wanted: Her Grief drew some reluctant Tears from him, while he endeavour'd to conceal the inward Anguish; the Hero and the Lover appear'd in his Behaviour. And when, to excuse the Intemperance of her Sorrow, his Wife urged the Dangers of the Seas, and the Rage of barbarous Nations on the Shore; I shall never forget with what an Air of Greatness he replied — *Je Crains Dieu, je n' ai point d' autre Crainte.* — Thus undaunted would the Godlike Man have appeared, had he seen the Stars falling from their Orbs, and heard the Sound of the last Thunders. — When he had, with an apparent Regret, freed himself from the Embraces of his Wife — with a Look of Compassion, like that of some pitying Angel, he bid me farewell — His Domesticks were lost in Grief — The Passage from his House was crowded with his grateful Dependants, whose Wrongs or Necessities had been redress'd by him: A thousand ardent Prayers for his Prosperity reached the Skies, and gained the divine Assent; while he hasted through the admiring Throng, distressed with the popular Applause.

How poor a Figure is that of a Libertine, in his most glittering Heights of Vanity, compared

to this great Man, who has so early begun his Race of Glory — and is in the very Bloom of Youth mature in every Virtue! Instead of passing his Hours in a Train of idle Amusements, the gay Part of his Life is devoted to Heaven, and the Publick Welfare. — You know where to find

Your humble Servant,

MELINDA.



LET.



L E T T E R X V .

To EUSEBIUS.



S my Reformation is partly owing to that exalted Notion of Virtue, your Example gave me, 'tis one of the greatest Satisfactions I have, to exprefs the Sense of that immense Obligation, by unfolding the most secret Recesses of my Soul to you.

I cannot but communicate my Content, while every View my Thoughts take, heightens my Happiness : I look back on the stormy Ocean, the Tumult and Perplexity of my Life past, and bless the gracious Power, that saved me on the very Edge of Perdition ; when I look forward, my Expectations are all bright and unbounded.

I bid my Soul take its Ease — banish every Care — and act without Restrain, the glorious Prodigal — I survey my vast Possession, lose my Wishes in endless Plenty, and give up all my Powers to Indolence and Joy — I look to the Stars, count the heavenly Glories, and call the Treasures of Eternity my own.

LET

LET Chaos come again ; be the gay Creation lost in Darkness, and the fair Face of Nature become an universal Blank : Let her Beauties fade, and those divine Characters she wears be effaced ; I shall yet be happy, when the Groves shall no more renew their Verdure ; nor the Valleys boast their flow'ry Pride — when the Sun is extinguish'd in the Skies ; and all the Etherial Lamps have burnt out their golden Flames — when the commissioned Angel shall lift his Hand on high ; and swear by the unutterable Name — That Time shall be no more — when these transitory Images of Things for ever take their Flight ; I shall explore the Worlds of Life and Pleasure ; and triumph in the Plenitude of Bliss.

THEN shall the Celestial *Arcana* be unveil'd ; and the Heaven of Heavens disclose their Glories ; the ineffable Divinity shall show the milder Beauties of his Face, and manifest as much of his Excellence, as created Intellects can support : But what Angels Wing has measured the Height of his Throne ? Who has entered those sacred Recesses, where He dwells in Himself, possessed of unbounded Bliss ? Has the Ocean of Joy been fathomed ; or the Limits of independent Felicity described ? Who has found Access to the inmost Habitations of the most High, and gazed on essential Glory, before whose fainter Emanations, the Angelick Splendors are eclipsed, the Thrones and Principalities of Light disappear ?

What

*What Path is found to those sublime Retreats,
Where Pleasure banquets in its Regal Seats?
Where Beauty triumphs in her native Bower,
Uncopy'd yet by the creating Power,
Ten thousand various Forms, divinely Fair,
Sparkle in their supream Ideas there;
While Wisdom, with superior Order shines,
In boundless Schemes, and infinite Designs;
Wondrous the Prospect, clear, and unconfin'd,
But open only to th' Eternal Mind.*

*What tow'ring Intellect, with daring Flight
Has made Excursion thro' these Realms of Light;
The blest Recesses, where th' Approachless God
From all Duration, made his high Abode!*

*Whoe'er has mark'd, with bold enquiring Eyes,
From whence the secret Springs of Life arise?
How from their deep exhaustless Source they flow,
To actuate Heav'n, and cheer the World below?*

*Those dazzling Habitations who has found,
Where Love, in all his heavenly Charms sits crown'd?
Great Love, the Almighty Father's first Delight,
His Image, and the Darling of his Sight:
The full Resemblance of the Deity,
Who all his glorious Image stamp'd on Thee:
'Twas Thou, who didst his boundless Thoughts
(employ,*

*His sole Complacence, his peculiar Joy,
From Ages unbegun—but who can tell
Thy Generation, and thy Birth reveal?*

What

*What Thought can measure back the long Extent
Of nameless Times, and speak thy great Descent?*

*Before the Hills appear'd, or Fountains flow'd,
Or golden Flames in the blue Ether glow'd;
Before the vast Creation had a Name,
Thou wast in Bliss and Dignity the same:
By Thee the Sun, by Thee the Stars were made,
The spacious Skies, at thy Command were spread:
The Heav'n of Heav'ns, the Empyrean Coasts,
Were form'd by Thee, with all their num'rous Hosts;
Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Pow'rs,
Who sing thy Conquests, in th' immortal Bow'rs.
For Thou dost ev'ry Heav'nly Breast enflame,
And loud Victoria's answer to thy Name:
Their Beings, and their Bliss, they owe to Thee,
Thou equal Offspring of the Deity;
His perfect Image thou dost justly prove;
For all the bright Divinity is Love.*

You find, in whatever Character I act, whether the Saint or the Libertine; Love is the animating Motive, the leading Principle; but how superior are my Prospects? How glorious the Hopes that now fire my Soul, to the trifling Ends I had lately in View? my Desires terminate in nothing below infinite Excellence, and unbounded Felicity.

Adieu.

LET-



The STORY of Olinda and Sophronia :

Translated from Tasso's Jerusalem, Book 2.



THE KING was now with Martial Cares
oppress'd,
When curst *Ismenes* thus his Lord ad-
dress'd.

To share your Fate, great Sir, I left my Cell,
And bring you all th' assisting Force of Hell :
Th' infernal Spirits, subject to my Will,
With eager Speed my strict Commands fulfill ;
By them inform'd, this Method I propose,
To guard the Fortress, and insult your Foes.

Beneath a Temple, which the Christians own,
Descends a Vault, to all, but them, unknown :
Within the awful consecrated Ground,
An Image of the Virgin Mother's found ;
Perpetual Lamps before the wond'rous Maid
Are lighted up, and fragrant Incense laid.
This Statue, Sir, by your own Hands convey'd
From thence, must be in *Macon's* Temple laid ;
Secur'd by Spells, while that does safe remain,
Godfrey shall storm the fated Town in vain.

This said, th' impatient King directs his Pace,
With impious Fury, to the holy Place :
Nor to prophane the sacred Pavement fears,
But madly thence the beauteous Image bears ;
Then in his God's polluted Seat 'twas laid,
While o'er it every Charm the Wizzard said.

N

But

But when in Heaven the next gay Morning shone,
 Its Guardian finds the sacred Treasure gone,
 Searches in vain ; then, with a thousand Fears,
 Distracted to the Court the Tidings bears.
 The Prince his Christian Subjects first suspects,
 And all his flaming Rage at them directs :
 But whether human Hands the Work had done,
 Or Power divine, to Men was yet unknown.
 The curst Inchanter mutters o'er his Spells,
 Yet nothing by the Hellish Art reveals ;
 Each House was ransack'd to its last Retreat,
 But no Success th' enraged Enquirers met.
 'Tis then resolved, (the raving Monarch cries)
 I'll doom them all one general Sacrifice,
 The Guiltless with th' unknown Offender falls ;
 A Fact like this for speedy Vengeance calls.

This cruel Sentence reach'd the Christian's Ears,
 Their sudden Fate unusual Horror wears ;
 No dawning Hope of Safety was in Sight,
 No Method of Defence, or secret Flight ;
 Nor dare they Mercy from the Tyrant crave,
 Their last and desperate Refuge was the Grave :
 But Heav'n, which ne'er abandons the Distress'd,
 Provides them Succour, where they hop'd it least.

A beauteous Virgin liv'd, but liv'd unknown,
 Amidst the Concourse of the noisy Town ;
 A lively Bloom adorn'd her charming Face,
 An artless Softness and perswasive Grace :
 To this Advantage favouring Heaven had join'd
 The richer Blessing of a noble Mind ;
 With pious Thoughts, and sacred Zeal inspir'd,
 From all the World she would have liv'd retir'd,
 But envious Love the chaste Design forbid,
 Nor suffer'd so much Merit to be hid :
 A youthful Votary, to her guiltless Eyes,
 His fatal Pow'r had doom'd a Sacrifice ;

One Creed, one holy Faith they both confess'd,
 In one pure Form were both their Pray'rs address'd;
 The Youth as modest as his Mistress fair,
 With awful Silence still conceal'd his Care;
 And still the lovely Author of his Pains,
 A Stranger to his am'rous Grief remains;
 His Cares and Services were all unpaid,
 Nor once regarded by the wary Maid.

The Christian's Danger now had reach'd her Ears,
 And fill'd her with a thousand growing Fears:
 At last some generous Stratagem she sought,
 How by her own, their Safety might be bought:
 But Shame, and Female Fear, th' Attempt restrain,
 And render all her great Intentions vain;
 'Till bolder Hope her first Design renews,
 Which bravely now the steadfast Maid pursues.

She pass'd the crouded Streets with sober Pace,
 Nor strove to veil, nor yet expose her Face;
 Downward her Eyes with modest Looks incline,
 And with a nice engaging Coyness shine;
 Her charming Air, her easy Mien, and Dress,
 Nor Art, nor perfect Negligence confess:
 Admir'd of all, the thoughtful Beauty pass'd,
 And met the wild disorder'd King at last:
 "Great Sir, (she then began) the Christians spare,
 "And I th' unknown Offender will declare."

A decent Boldness lighten'd in her Eyes,
 Whose piercing Lustre every Heart surprize;
 The vanquish'd Monarch stood confus'd and charm'd,
 His Visage alter'd, and his Rage disarm'd;
 Ev'n Love had enter'd, but th' imperious Fair
 Attack'd his Soul by Methods too severe;
 Not Frowns, nor coy forbidding Beauty move,
 But gentle Smiles indulge the Flame of Love:
 Yet, if not Love, Amazement and Delight,
 Her Charms within his doubtful Breast excite:

He paus'd, and thus — “ Let me the Secret share,
 “ The People's Lives, at thy Request, I'll spare.

From first to last, (she cries) the bold Design,
 The great Attempt, and daring Action's mine.

And thus, by an heroical Deceit,
 Her Life abandon'd for the publick Fate,
 Again enquir'd the yet suspended King;

“ Who was thy curs'd Adviser in the Thing?

Th' undaunted Maid replies, “ The whole Design,

“ Contriv'd, resolv'd, and executed's, mine :

“ The Danger, the Fatigue, was mine alone,

“ The Guilt and Glory shall be all my own.

Enraged, the Tyrant then replies, — “ And all

“ My Vengeance on thy wretched Head shall fall.

“ 'Tis just (she calmly said) and I'm content,

“ Th' illustrious Action mine, mine be the Punishment.

“ But, Sir, your anxious Searches are in vain,

“ The violated Image to regain,

“ For nothing but its Ashes now remain.

“ This way secur'd, that by no Pagan Hand

“ The holy Shrine might be again prophan'd ;

“ Demand no more, my Lord, enough is known,

“ The Action I both justify and own.

Her daring Language, and relentless Air,
 No more the wild outrageous King could bear,
 No more his swelling Fury could restrain,
 Her Youth, her powerful Beauty plead in vain ;
 Nor interceding Love his Rigour tames,
 The pity'd Virgin's sentenc'd to the Flames,
 Whom thence (yet with Compassion and Remorse)
 The murm'ring Pagans in a Tumult force :

Her Hands are bound, her modest Face unveil'd,

No more its Charms from vulgar Eyes conceal'd.

Tho' void of Fear, her doubtful Looks confess

A soft Concern, and human Tenderness :

The

The rosy Blush, that from her Visage flies,
Not Paleness, but a snowy White supplies.

Mean Time, the wond'rous Accident was known
From Street to Street, thro' all the swarming Town :
The Person doubtful, the Relation true,
Among the rest, *Olinda* thither drew :
Too soon the wretched Youth approach'd, and found
By impious Hands, his charming Mistress bound ;
Distracted now among the Guards he press'd,
And thus aloud th' astonish'd King address'd.

“ Ah ! Royal Sir, yourself no more deceive,
“ Nor this fond Maid's invented Tale believe :
“ Could she, alas ! the cautious Watch betray,
“ And from its Seat the weighty Shrine convey ?
“ 'Tis Fiction all — the Enterprize was mine,
“ Nor will I thus a glorious Fate resign.
“ (He adds) Your Temple down a sloping Way
“ Receives the Light, and draws the beamy Day ;
“ Through that I stole the sacred Prize away :
“ My Lord, the sentenc'd Criminal you see,
“ These Chains, this cruel Death belongs to me.
“ And could not then a single Life suffice,
“ Unhappy Youth ? (the fair *Sophronia* cries,
“ With kindling Love and Pity in her Eyes)
“ What Rage, what Fury mov'd thee to expose
“ Thy self a Victim to relentless Foes ?
“ What Tears, what mean Reluctance have I shown,
“ That you believe I cannot die alone ?

But nothing could her kind Repulses gain,
Unshaken still his first Designs remain.
With steadfast Courage each despises Life,
And long between them held the gen'rous Strife ;
Virtue, and mighty Love, dispute the Field,
And neither in the friendly Contest yield.

The Tyrant raves, nor longer now refrains,
But both one cruel Punishment ordains :

Com-

Commission'd, soon the charming Youth they bind
With heavy Chains, and to the Stake confin'd.

" Are these (he cries) the Fetters Love prepares ?

" This the Reward of all my tender Cares ?

" With softer Thoughts I fed my fond Desires,

" And hop'd to meet thee in more gentle Fires :

" Yet, could I falling in thy tender Arms

" Expire, my Death had still a Thousand Charms,

" Could I receive thy parting Sighs, and join,

" At the last fatal Gasp, my Lips with thine ;

" Our Souls united then to Heaven should fly,

" And I content my charming Fair should die.

" Far other Cares (she mildly said) than these,

" *Olinda*, should our serious Minds possess ;

" Lament thy Sins, contemplate the Reward,

" For Faith, and humble Penitence prepar'd :

" The Palm, the Starry Crown, and Martyr's Due,

" With all the boundless Raptures that ensue ;

" Survey the Sun, survey the dazzling Sky,

" To those blest Regions we must shortly fly.

Of Gods and Men the Pagans murmur'd loud,

The Christians silent weep among the Croud.

The King, nor could his Pity be disguis'd,

A strange unusual Tenderness surpriz'd ;

He durst no more the moving Object view,

But fix'd, and scorning to relent, withdrew :

Sophronia unconcern'd alone appears,

Nor in the universal Sorrow shares.

The mournful Officers had plac'd the while,

And now were lighting up the smoaky Pile ;

When a young Champion, with a martial Grace,

And lofty Mien, approach'd the fatal Place.

A Tygress on her plummy Helmet shone,

Which for the fair *CLARINDA* made her known :

Her Sex's nicer Ornaments she fled,

In toilsome Arms, to great Atchievements bred :

Her

Her Hands the Labour of the Loom refuse,
 Nor in a Closet could her Mind amuse ;
 But o'er the Fields, in savage Spoils array'd,
 Or thro' the Woods, with fearless Thoughts she stray'd :
 When yet a Child, the fiery Steed she rein'd,
 Challeng'd the Race, or wrestled on the Sand ;
 Vast Desarts, Hills, and pathless Wilds she trac'd,
 When with her Spear the foaming Boar she chac'd.

From *Persia* now the blooming Warrior came,
 To win new Trophies of immortal Fame ;
 In Battles past her Sword had oft compell'd
 The scatter'd Gauls to quit the bloody Field :
 Majestick Charms, which every Heart surprize,
 And awful Glories sparkle in her Eyes.

Arriving here, prepar'd for Death, she found
 The tender Youth, and lovely Virgin bound :
 The feeble Sex to Heav'n her Eyes address'd,
 And in her Looks a silent Calm express'd ;
 The other grieves, and melts in pitying Tears,
 Not for his own unhappy Fate, but hers.
 The warlike Nymph for both Compassion proves,
 But most her Care the silent Sufferer moves :
 She to the People turns, nor loses Time,
 Demands with haste, and hears in brief their Crime :
 Intreats the Execution they'd delay,
 And helps herself the rising Flames to stay ;
 Then charg'd, — “ Let none this Office undertake,
 “ 'Till from the King I send them Orders back.

Her bold Commands the willing Croud obey,
 She, to the Court directed, speeds away,
 And Audience gain'd, — begins, “ Great Prince, from
 “ far

“ Th' unknown *Clarinda* comes, with you to share
 “ The Toils and Hazards of the hostile Field ;
 “ A Volunteer to your Commands I yield,

“ Whether

- " Whether to meet the Battle on the Plain,
 " Or at the Walls the Breaches to maintain.
 The King replies, " Who has not heard thy Fame?
 " What distant Climes are Strangers to thy Name?
 " Thy Deeds, illustrious Virgin, spread thy Praise,
 " Where'er the wand'ring Sun reveals his Rays:
 " Assisted thus, we *Godfrey's* Arms defy,
 " By thee secur'd of certain Victory;
 " To thy Command our Forces we resign,
 " The War, and all its glorious Conduct's thine.
 Her modest Thanks the graceful Maid express'd,
 And thus again her gen'rous Suit address'd.
 " Unusual 'tis, I know, my Lord, and hard,
 " For Service unperform'd to ask Reward;
 " But by your Royal Clemency assur'd,
 " I boldly beg, of quick Success secur'd:
 " Reverse, Great Sir, the sentenc'd Lovers Doom,
 " An Act like this your Bounty will become.
 " Nothing was e'er (the vanquish'd King replied)
 " To such a fair Petitioner deny'd;
 " Their Lives, heroick Maid, your Purchase be,
 " Guilty, or Innocent, I set them free.





L E T T E R X V I I .

From BELLAMOUR, relating the Sequel of his Passion for ALMEDA, in the First Part of Letters Moral and Entertaining.

My dear *Carlos*,



A M pleased to find; that neither the Gaiety of your Humour, nor your own successful Amours, have made you insensible to the Misfortunes of your Friend : Your Compassion is some Relief, for I am really past Jestings, and Raillery in this Case, would have been inhuman.

Y O U may remember in my last Letter, I had some Hopes the Discovery of my Inclinations for *Almeda*, would prevail with *Elvira*, to free me from the Engagement I made to my Father to marry her ; but I was disappointed, all the Art and Eloquence I employ'd, to paint the Height of my Passion for her Rival, had just the contrary Effect : Instead of raising her Anger, and Resentment, it melted her into a Tenderness, of which I had never thought her capable : At last she told me, though she would not suffer her

O

Tongue,

Tongue, so far to belye the Sentiments of her Heart, as to refuse me, yet I might refuse to marry her, if I knew how to dispense with my Obligations to a dying Father.

THE naming my Father, gave a pious Emotion to my Soul, and awaken'd all the filial Gratitude, and Veneration due to his Memory : I am no Libertine, Virtue and Vice are with me real Distinctions, I dare not violate my Word to the meanest of my Dependants ; nor even to my worst Enemy. Honour and Conscience have hitherto governed my secret Actions : I felt the Force of *Elvira's* Words, and left her without making any Reply.

BUT how am I embarrass'd ? If I had never seen the charming *Almeda*, I must have been unhappy ; *Elvira* has been, from her Infancy, bred up with my Sisters ; my Affection for her has been always the same as for them ; and seems the Tie of Nature, not of Choice : In all the little Freedoms of Conversation, I have treated her with the same Decency, as if she stood in that Relation. Destiny seemed to have set some sacred Bounds between us, that it would have been criminal to violate : This Sentiment is so habitual to my Thoughts, that I could as soon commit Incest, and break in on all the Sanctity of Nature's Laws, as fall in Love with *Elvira* : She is handsome enough, so are my Sisters : I love her as I do them, with a very pure and innocent Affection. Her Charms have never kindled one soft Desire in my Breast, rather a religious Horror
would

would seize me in addressing her : She is as secure from my Attempts, as if an Angel stood visibly before me, to guard her Virtue.

IN this Situation, imagine, if you can, how miserable I must be with this Legacy of a Wife : She brings a vast Fortune you will tell me ; but, my dear *Carlos*, could she bring me both the *Indies*, it could be no Relief to my domestick Chagrin : I am no Rake, nor could you propose any fashionable Liberty, but what would heighten my Uneasiness : Yet I dare not reflect on my Father, 'twas not Avarice that govern'd him, but rather Compassion for a young Orphan committed to his Care ; however I suffer, be his Memory unblemished, and the sacred Remains undisturbed by my Complaints.

BUT the Crisis of my Misery is yet untold ; *Almeda* is fixed to her cruel Resolution, of seeing me no more ; to what Cave, what Desert, what unfrequented Place she is retired, I cannot find ; but she is certainly eloped from mortal Men, and escapes all my Enquiries : However, she has favoured me with the enclosed Letter, since her Retreat, which I have sent to justify the Height of my Passion ; by which you'll see the Beauty of her Mind, is equal to that of her charming Person.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

BELLAMOUR.

To BELLAMOUR,

“ I Had not the least Intention ever to write to
 “ you more, or put you in mind, there was
 “ such a Person in the World as *Almeda*; had
 “ not your Distresses reach’d me, and your En-
 “ deavours to find me out, obliged me to assure
 “ you the Search is vain: I am determined never
 “ to see you more, and this shall be the last Let-
 “ ter you will ever receive from me; which I
 “ write purely for your Consolation, if an Ac-
 “ count of my Quiet will be any to you.

“ FROM the Moment you told me my Happi-
 “ ness depended on *Elvira*’s refusing you, I dis-
 “ miss’d every flattering Hope: I was sensible
 “ she knew too well how to distinguish Merit;
 “ and how rarely such Excellency as yours is to
 “ be met with: To resign you to the Possession
 “ of another, to conquer the warmest Wishes,
 “ and find Happiness in giving Pleasure to those
 “ we love, abstracted from our selves, is a Re-
 “ finement few People are capable of; and what
 “ I did not expect from *Elvira*: She is conscious
 “ of her own superior Charms, and may reason-
 “ ably hope to gain your Heart; whilst her
 “ Esteem for you, would not suffer her to let you
 “ dispose of yours to a Person, who, in the com-
 “ mon Views of Mankind, is unworthy of you.

“ OH! why did Fate throw you in my Way?
 “ Was it only to awaken me from my stupid
 “ Negligence of the World, to a Sense of Sorrow?
 “ to shew me a Glimpse of Happiness, only
 “ to

“ to make me more sensible of my Indigence :
 “ Had your Part in Life been to act the Depen-
 “ dant, and mine the advanced Station, you had
 “ been left to me in quiet, no Body would have
 “ disputed my Right : And I should have found
 “ more, much more Pleasure, in rewarding such
 “ Merit, than I should have done now in sharing
 “ your Fortune : But why do I expostulate with
 “ Heaven, who, no doubt, allotted me into this
 “ Sphere of Life, as most suitable for me : It is
 “ in our own Power to make the Incidents of
 “ human Life Good or Evil : 'Tis our own
 “ Minds that constitute them either : The Re-
 “ ception they meet with there, and the Turn
 “ they take, gives them their proper Tincture.
 “ Let us not disturb the wise Oeconomy, but
 “ submit to the Methods of Providence : You
 “ have obey'd your Father in the Disposal of
 “ your Person to *Elvira*, let her have your Mind
 “ also, 'tis her Right : I will confess it is. There
 “ only I could envy her Happiness, and 'tis
 “ there her Delicacy could never endure a Rival :
 “ Let us not be just by halves ; may the same
 “ generous Spirit, that carried you through the
 “ first Marks of your Obedience, animate you
 “ through all the Offices of the most exalted Vir-
 “ tue : I leave you, that I may be no Obstacle
 “ to it, and beg you to consider whatever Faults
 “ you commit to *Elvira*, I am the Occasion :
 “ And while I flie from all Commerce with you
 “ to preserve my Innocence, you will frustrate
 “ my Endeavours, and make me Guilty,

“ THERE

“ THERE is a Pleasure in our very Sorrows,
“ when they flow for a worthy Object; you can
“ give me that Pleasure, and justify me to my
“ self, and by those very Virtues that tear you
“ from me, bind me faster to you, and give me
“ a Vanity in you: Your Happiness will be mine,
“ I will not tell you that I can forget you, it is
“ impossible. The Roses must forget to bloom,
“ the Birds to warble from the Beach; the gay
“ Creation be undress’d, and I insensible to Per-
“ fection, e’er your Image can be erased out of
“ my Heart, or it can receive any other Impres-
“ sion. A Heart that has been your Prize, can-
“ not descend to a meaner Sacrifice; no, the Pas-
“ sion you have inspired, suits the Grandeur of
“ your exalted Genius, and must have the same
“ Duration with your Virtue. I retire from the
“ World, not to avoid, but to enjoy you more
“ at Liberty. We are never absent from those
“ we love, every Beauty that Nature can pro-
“ duce, brings you to my Thoughts, since you
“ have pointed out all their various Charms to
“ me; taught me how to relish Solitude, and
“ directed my Mind to Entertainments above the
“ Reach of Fortune.

“ THAT Sentiment of Tenderness I have for
“ you, has some Emanation of Divinity upon
“ it; while it naturally leads me to the Con-
“ templation of the Supream Excellence; and
“ directs my Devotions to the Fountain of Beau-
“ ty: Those Hopes and Fears, which alternately
“ elevate, or depress the Mind, in all human
“ Ex-

“ Expectations vanish : The Soul is at Liberty
 “ to pursue the Interest of another Life, raises its
 “ Thoughts above this little Scene of Things,
 “ to fairer, future Worlds ; breaks off the Fet-
 “ ters that chain it to this World, and smiles
 “ through her Prison, with a holy Impatience,
 “ on the Joys of Immortality : There all humane
 “ Distinctions will be lost, and Gold will have
 “ nothing to do in the settling of them.

“ PERHAPS the gay World will pity me,
 “ and think Religion, and a Cell, but a melan-
 “ choly Recourse ; but I shall not find it so,
 “ while I am not secluded from the generous
 “ *Monimia's* chearing Eye : Her delicate and
 “ blameless Sensibility of human Passions, (she
 “ to whom Suffering is a Merit) softens every
 “ Care, and raises every Joy ; while she descends
 “ from the height of Grandeur, to the gentle
 “ Offices of the sincere Friend, she forgets every
 “ Advantage of Fortune, till Virtue in Distress
 “ calls for her Aid : Her Titles have no Energy
 “ with her, but when they give her a Privilege
 “ of doing Good, and then she exerts them to
 “ their full Force ; she feels they cannot buy
 “ Freedom to the Mind ; and that no Calamity
 “ will retire in respect to them : Fate has so or-
 “ der'd it, that there is some Similitude in our
 “ Destinies, which reconciles me to mine ; while
 “ she recommends Piety and Resignation, with
 “ the strongest and most beautiful Arguments,
 “ her own Example ; and fortifies my Mind, by
 “ putting every Virtue, by her own Practice, in
 “ the

" the most amiable Light. Sometimes she sings
 " a *Requiem* to our Sorrows; sooths them to
 " Peace, with the most harmonious Numbers,
 " and I have the Ease of seeing my Thoughts
 " express'd in hers, with every Elegance; and
 " when the serious Soul exerts itself, she anticipates
 " Heaven, and gives a sweet Foretaste of
 " the Songs of Angels: Thus we baffle Disappointment,
 " and elude our Sufferings; Honours, Wealth,
 " and Beauty, stand abash'd to see themselves
 " despised, while Devotion claps her Wings,
 " at this her fairest Triumph.

" You will, I hope, from what I have said,
 " be satisfy'd I am not unhappy; and take this
 " last Assurance from me, that I can never be so,
 " whilst you are bless'd: You have annihilated
 " every Sense of Sorrow in me, I have no Tears
 " but when you claim them.

Adieu.



LET-



LETTER XVIII.

*To Lady MARY, from her Sister, just before
her Death.*

*I come, ye Ghosts, prepare your roseate Bow'rs,
Celestial Palms, and ever-blooming Flow'rs;
Thither, where Sinners may have Rest, I go,
Where Flames refin'd, in Breasts Seraphick, glow.*

POPE.



THIS, my dear Sister, is my long,
my final Adieu, till we meet in
happier Regions: The Springs
of Life are running low, and
Nature tired with human Chan-
ges, longs to be at rest: The
Grave attends me, that Mansion of Silence and
Repose.

*I soon shall close my weary Eyes in Peace,
And stretch compos'd, upon my dusty Bed:
Oh Death! thy quiet and refreshing Shade,
Shall yield a long, an unmolested Rest
From all the fruitless Toil and Vanity,
That dwells below the Sun* —

P

I HAVE

I HAVE had an ill State of Health for some Years, and have lately had two Fits of an Apoplexy; the third my Physician is so sincere to let me know will be fatal: I am now indisposed, and find some certain Symptoms of its Return; which makes me resolve to unburden my Soul of its last Pressure.

FORGIVE me, ye injured Shades of my great Ancestors, nor blot my Name from your illustrious Line. — My dear Sister, can your rigid Virtue forgive my Fault, and plead my Defence to my injured Husband, when I am silent in the Dust? Dear Lady *Mary*, will you not pardon a Crime which is blotted out by Heaven? with that my Peace is made, by a long Course of Temperance: Weeks, and Months, and Years, are past, since the Date of my Guilt: The Rising, and the Setting Sun, has been a constant Witness to my Devotions; the Moon and midnight Stars were constant to my Tears.

THIS, as you know, sixteen Years since I was married to Count *Edgar*: I have had two Sons, and three Daughters; but shall I own this shameful Truth, the eldest of the two Brothers is not his! On a fatal Night (let the Horror of Darkness cover it) I was in my Husband's Absence, by the Marquis *de* —, seduced; 'twas not the Contrivance of a formal Amour, but the Effect of Inadvertency and Surprise: Oh! where was my Guardian Angel in that loose Moment, that Interval of Reproach and Madness!

THE Subject is too infamous, for me to enter into Particulars ; but I have full Assurance this Youth is not the Count's Son, though his Confidence in me, with his easy Temper, kept him from ever making the least Inquiry into any Circumstance of my Guilt : He has lately made his Will ; and to the eldest Brother (being his greatest Favourite) given his whole Estate ; leaving the rest entirely dependent on this Son, which, to my Confusion, is not his own.

THIS Secret, dear Lady *Mary*, I must intreat you to discover to Count *Edgar* after my Death ; that he may do his own Children Justice, and only provide moderately for the other : Assure him, that it was only in this Instance I ever wronged my Fidelity to him : This is the utmost Reparation I can make ; and with a Mind unburthened I now cast my self on infinite Mercy, and smile in the View of Death.

*I come, ye Ministers of Fate, I come ;
But while I pass the intervening Gloom,
Should rising Doubts my trembling Heart invade,
With Musick chear the melancholy Shade :
In soothing Strains a gentle Requiem sing,
And touch, with heav'nly Art, the golden String ;
The charming Sound shall ev'ry Care beguile,
And make the Seats of Desolation smile :
My Soul, prepar'd by sacred Extasy,
Shall learn, and join the Chorus of the Sky.*

ONCE more, my dear Sister, adieu! Let my Crime warn you never to be vain, or secure: From the Height of self Confidence, and arrogant Virtue, I was left to make this reproachful Step to humble me. My Repentance has been deep and sincere; and, through the Divine Redemption, my Pardon is procured, and my Guilt for ever obliterated.

Your dying Friend,

HERMIONE.



LET-



L E T T E R X I X .

A Letter from ARISTUS, giving his Friend a Relation of the sudden Death of his new Bride, who was seized in the Chapel while the sacred Rites were performing.



MY Fate will furnish you with a full Evidence of the Vanity of human Happiness: My last Letter was writ in the Height of Success, with the most arrogant Expectations and Boast of a lasting Felicity; now 'tis all changed, the Shadows of Night cover me.

THE lovely *Erminia*, whom I had so long pursued, and at last persuaded to crown my Wishes; the very Morning she gave me her Hand, before the sacred Ceremony was finished, was surprized with the fatal Message of Death; and carried in a Swoon from the Chapel to her Chamber, where she soon expired in her Mother's Arms: This Hour, she appeared with all the
Cost

Cost and Splendor of a youthful Bride ; the next, she is a pale and senseless Corps, muffled in a ghastly Shroud : Those Charms, that in the Morning promised an eternal Bloom, before the Evening have dropped their smiling Pride ; the sparkling Eyes are sunk in Darkness ; the soft, the tuneful Voice is for ever silent ; while a livid Hue sits on the late rosy Lips.

*Thus airy Pleasure dances in our Eyes,
And spreads false Images in fair Disguise,
T'allure our Souls ; till just within our Arms,
The Vision dies, and all the painted Charms
Flee quick away from the pursuing Sight,
Till they are lost in Shades, and mingle with the
(Night.*

ON Death ! How cruel was the Triumph ! Youth and Beauty, Joy, and blooming Hope, lie here a Victim to thy Rage : The darksome Prison of the Grave must now confine thy gentle Captive ; instead of the Pomp of a bridal Bed, the cold Earth must be her Lodging, Dust and Corruption her Covering.

You will now expect I should practise the Principles I have so often asserted, in exercising my boasted Reason and Moderation ; or leave you to insult me, with the Arguments I lately produced, to allay your Grief, under the Pressure of an uncommon Misfortune : This Reproach
would

Moral *and* Entertaining. 111

would be but just at a Period, when Heaven has given me a full Evidence of the Truths I confessed, and set the Vanity of human Hopes in the clearest Demonstration before me. One would think I should now, if ever, find it easy to moralize on these Subjects, and act the Philosopher from mere Necessity, if not from Virtue.

WERE the Case yours, or any body's but my own, how many wise Things should I repeat! how fluently could I talk! so much more easy is it to dictate, than to practise: And yet I am reasonable by Intervals; I am in more than Name a Christian, in some bright Periods; I feel the Force of that Profession, and pay Homage to its sacred Rules: A heavenly Ray scatters my Grief, and cheers my Soul with Divine Consolations: The gay and the gloomy Appearances of mortal Things vanish, before the Gleams of celestial Light: Immortal Pleasures, with gentle Invitations, call me to the Skies, and all my Thoughts ascend.

BUT how short my Triumph! how easy the Transition from Reason to Madness! Of what surprizing Variety is a human Mind capable! Light and Darkness, Heaven and Hell, seem blended within; 'tis all Chaos, and wild Disorder: That Reason which one Moment relieves me, the next seems with a just Train of Ideas to torment me.

See

*See there, all pale and dead, she lies ;
 For ever flow my streaming Eyes :
 Fly Hymen, with extinguisht Fires ;
 Fly nuptial Bliss, and chaste Desires :
 Erminia's fled, the lovely'st Mind,
 Faith, Sweetness, Wit, together join'd.*

*Dwelt Faith, and Wit, and Sweetness there ?
 Ob view the Change, and drop a Tear.*

Adieu.



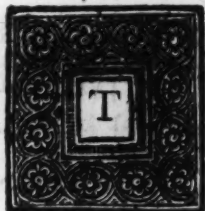
LET-



L E T T E R XX.

To LYCIDAS.

My dear LYCIDAS,



HERE are Seasons, when the Mind dilates itself, and, sensible of its own Grandeur, breaks through the Limits of this lower Creation, in Search of some unknown, and yet untasted Pleasures: This is my present Disposition; the wide Limits of the Sky have nothing to entertain me: Nature seems exhausted, and indigent; should she uncover her golden Mines, or disclose the Ruby sparkling in its Bed, let her open the Veins of Sapphire; and shew the Diamond glittering on its native Rock — I have no Avarice of this kind; the orient Clouds that now adorn the western Sky, could I reach them, would be a more substantial Treasure. — Appear, ye fairest Blandishments of Sense; tho' lovely as the Daughters of *Eden*, your Allurements would now be lost. — Let Sensuality appear in all her Charms, the *Persian* Delicacy, and the *Roman* Pride; — let the Pageantry of
Q State,

State, the Triumphs lost in long Oblivion, put on airy Forms, and pass in their visionary Splendour before me; in my present Situation, methinks I could despise them all. — These Scenes would be but tiresome Repetitions; for they are no Novelties to my active Imagination; *Cleopatra's* expensive Vanity, and *Pompey's* Glory, are my familiar Themes to luxuriant Fancy: Their Descriptions rather tire, than delight me. — Even the Magnificence of the starry Arch, the splendid Structure of the Universe, I now survey with Indolence: — I grow impatient to see a new and brighter Scene appear; when these old Heavens, and antiquated Earth, shall put off their perishable Forms, and stand dressed in immortal Beauty, and undecaying Excellence. Blessed Period! why art thou so long delayed? Oh stretch thy shining Wings, and come away! — Mend thy Pace, old lazy Time, and shake thy slow-paced Sands! — Make shorter Circles, ye rolling Planets! — Thou lingering Sun, how long wilt thou travel the celestial Road! when shall thy radiant Walk be finished! When will the great Angel arrest thee in thy Progress, and swear by him that made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that is therein, that *Time shall be no more.*

My impatient Soul springs forwards to salute the happy Period, and anticipates the promised Joy.

Great

*Great Nature then, thro' all her diff'rent Works,
Shall be transform'd; the Earth, and those gay Skies,
Shall be no more the same; a brighter Scene
Succeeds; and Paradise, in all its Charms,
Shall be renew'd; but far its Bliss improv'd,
Fitted for Minds, to whom the mighty Maker
Shall give the glorious Vision of his Face
Unveil'd, and smiling with eternal Love.*

*Here let me dwell, nor turn one careless Look
On yonder hated World; — here let me drink
Full Draughts of Bliss, and bathe in endless Floods
Of Life and Joy; — here let me still converse.
It cannot be! — Mortality returns!
Ye radiant Skies, adieu! — Ye starry Worlds,
I must fulfil my Day, and wait the Hour,
That brings eternal Liberty and Rest.*

My native Element prevails, and I must return to my original Earth again: but I believe you are not overjoyed at this Event; you could have resigned me to the Skies, in your present Disposition: An earthly Amour seems to engross your Affection; and I should much more have obliged you, by a Discourse of mortal Charms, than of celestial Attachments: But you must excuse me, my Mind is in a Position too sublime and delicate for these terrene Nymphs; as fair as your Mistress is, you have no Rival in me; at this Instant I am all for the Immortals.

*Oh ye fair Objects, ye untainted Springs,
 Of ev'ry Excellence, that charms the Sense!
 Ye native Beauties, ye primæval Sweets,
 That blossom in the Skies; — but for the Hopes
 Of those pure Entertainments after Death,
 My Soul would joyfully give up its Claim
 To an immortal State: — For what is Life,
 Reason, and these Capacities of Bliss,
 If lost on Toys! — No, I have nobler Aims,
 Desires unbounded by these narrow Skies,
 These gaudy, flying, transitory Scenes;
 Eternal Glories, and enchanting Beauties!*

NEXT time I see you, on Condition you will let me laugh, you shall talk of Loves and Graces, Lilies and Roses, Flames and Darts; till *Chanticleer* gives his last Summons to the Phantoms and Fairies to disappear.

CLERIMONT.



LET-



LETTER XXI.

*To the Earl of ****.*

My LORD,



AM just recovered of the Wound I received in the Duel, which you with so much Reason and Humanity endeavoured to prevent. I think my self now under an Obligation to own the Justice and Force of your Lordship's Arguments, and to retract whatever I said in Defence of such an inhuman Practice: It was Frenzy that made me reject the Advice of one, who had so true a Notion of Honour, and whose Courage had been so gloriously employed in the Cause of Liberty, and the Protestant Succession.

You told me what the Event of this mad Adventure would be, that instead of defending, I should expose my Sister's Innocence to the Publick Censure: It is too late for me to wish I had been guided by your generous and friendly Admonitions, which for the future will wear the Stamp of Infallibility on them: nor can I propose

pose to my self a nobler Example than your Lordship's, in every Part of human Life; the generous Friend, the tender Husband, and affectionate Parent, appear in their proper Lustre; — Virtue, with a superior Excellence, shines in your Character, and enforces her Precepts with resistless Eloquence.

THE Review of your Conduct is a severe Reproach to my own: I shall never reflect on my late ridiculous Exploit without Confusion: — Whatever Bravery I affected, I was conscious of the most slavish Fears, in the midst of my insolent Flights of Vanity; deliberate Guilt hung heavy on my Soul; I spent the Night before the bloody Affignation in Anguish, which no Words can express; infernal Visions haunted my Imagination; the Caverns of Night, the joyless Abodes, disclosed their Terrors to my distracted Fancy.

BUT so entirely was I governed by the Maxims of the licentious Part of the World, that with great Gallantry I challenged my own Ruin, and bid Defiance to Death and Damnation; exposing my self to all the Horrors, dreadful to Reason and Nature, to avoid the Imputation of Cowardice.

So tyrannical a thing is Custom, that 'tis necessary to ask the World Forgiveness, for presuming to be reasonable Creatures: People are often compelled to be mad in their own Defence, and to act against their Reason to avoid being singular. 'Tis hard indeed, that the Caprice of
Man-

Mankind should expect an Apology from the few that are wiser than the rest, for being awake and in their right Senses, that they should be forced to excuse themselves, for keeping their Eyes open, and having Penetration enough to foresee a distant Danger, and so much Discretion as to avoid it.

A MAN resolved to leap from a Precipice, might with a better Assurance ridicule his Companions for not promising to follow him; and more justly reproach them with Cowardice, for refusing to break their Necks, than these Men of Honour can upbraid a Person for not complying with their Rules of Valour, at the Expence of his Life, and all his Hopes of future Happiness. If my generous Adversary had not spared my Life, when it lay at his Mercy (while my Salvation depended upon that important Moment) instead of giving you this penitent Relation, I had been now cursing my own Folly, under the Weight of eternal Infamy.

Your Lordship's, &c.

ANTONIO.



L E T.



LETTER XXII.

To VALERIUS, from an English Merchant;
giving an Account of the Adventures of his
Voyage.



AM at last safely arrived in *Holland*, and have taken the first Opportunity to give you a Relation of the Adventures that detained me so long in foreign Countries.

IN my Return from the *Indies*, I had some Affairs with a *Spanish* Merchant, which while I was managing in one of their Sea-Ports, there came in a *Spanish* Corsair, who had taken a rich *Turkish* Prize, with several *Turks* and *Moors* Prisoners, whom he offered to sale as Slaves: I never had any Traffick of this kind, from any View of Interest; but from a Motive of Compassion, I had purchased Liberty for many a miserable Wretch, to whom I gave Freedom, the Moment I paid his Ransom.

AMONG the Captives newly taken, there was one distinguished by the Richness of his Habit,
and

and more by the Gracefulness of his Port. He drew all my Attention, of which he appear'd sensible, and still directed his Looks to me ; our Souls seem'd to greet one another, as if their Intimacy had been of a long standing, and commenc'd in some pre-existent Period : There was something in the Air of this young Stranger, superior to Adversity, and yet sensible of the present Disadvantage of his Fate ; while I felt for him an Emotion, soft as the Ties of Nature, and could not but impute it to the secret Impression of some intelligent Power, which was leading me to a Height of Generosity, beyond my own Intention ; and by an Impulse of Virtue on my Soul, directing it to the Accomplishment of some distant and unknown Design of Providence : The heavenly Instigation, came with a prevailing Force, and I could not but obey its Dictates.

The Price set on this Captive, was extravagantly high, and such as would be a vast Disadvantage to my present Affairs, to part with : However, I listen'd to the gentle Monitor within, and paid the Corsair his full Demands.

As soon as I had conducted the Youth to my Lodgings, I told him, he was from that Moment free ; the Price I had paid was for his Friendship and Liberty.

Then you have confined me (reply'd the gentle Stranger) by the most lasting Engagements ; I might have broke through any other Restraint, but I am now your voluntary Slave, and dare trust you with a Secret yet unknown to the Spaniards : My Name is

R

Orramel,

Orramel, *the only Son of a wealthy Bassa in Constantinople, and you may demand what you will for my Ransom.*

You will soon be convinced (said I) there was no mercenary Intention in this Action; the Amity I have for you is noble and disinterested, it was kindled by a celestial Spark, an Emanation from the divine Clemency, and terminates in nothing below your immortal Happiness: And were you inclin'd to examine those sacred Truths which would lead you to that Felicity, and to share my Fortunes in a free and happy Nation, the Wealth of the Indies should not buy you from my Affections: But if 'tis your Choice to return to the Customs and Religion of your Country, you are absolutely free, without attending any Terms for your Release.

WITH a friendly, but dejected Look, he told me, it was impossible for him to dispense with his filial Obligations to an indulgent Parent; but he positively refused his Freedom, 'till he had given Intelligence, and received an Answer from his Father; which he soon had with a *Carte Blanche* to me, on which I might make my own Demands for his Son's Ransom. I return'd it, with no other Terms, but the Liberty of all the Christian Slaves he had in his Possession; hoping by this disinterested Conduct, to leave a Conviction on the Mind of my young Friend, in Favour of Christianity. He could persuade me to receive nothing but some little Present, and left me with an apparent Concern.

IT was some Months after he was gone, before I could finish my Negotiations in *Spain*; but as soon as they were dispatch'd, I embark'd for *Holland*. We had not been a Week at Sea, before the Ship was taken by an *Algerine* Pyrate, and all the Men in it carried to *Constantinople*, to be sold as Slaves: My Lot fell to a Master, from whom I was like to find most barbarous Treatment; however, I was resolved to endure my Bondage, 'till I could give Intelligence to my Friends in *England*, to procure my Ransom: I was fix'd to this, that no Hardship should reduce me to give *Orramel* an Account of my Distress, 'till I was again in Circumstances, not to need his Kindness, nor expect a Retaliation of my own.

BUT Heaven had kinder Intentions, by bringing me into this Adversity, nor left me long without Redress: As I was talking in a Publick Place, to one of my Fellow Slaves, *Orramel* came by; he pass'd beyond me, but instantly returning, look'd on me with great Attention, 'till some melting Sorrow drop'd from his Eyes: When, making Enquiry of some that were near, to whom I belong'd, and being inform'd; without speaking a Word to me, he flew to my new Master, paid his Demand for my Ransom, and immediately conducted me to his House, where he welcom'd me with the warmest Marks of Affection: He spoke, — he paused, — and was in the greatest Perplexity, to find Language suitable to the Sentiments of his Soul.

My Brother ! (said he) my Friend ! — or if there are more sacred Ties in Nature or Virtue, let me call you by some gentler Appellation : We are now united by the Bands of celestial Amity, one in the same Holy Faith, and Hopes of a glorious Immortality : Your Charity rescued me from a worse than Spanish Slavery, from the Bondage of Vice and Superstition ; your Conduct banished my Prejudices to the Christian Name, and made way for the Entrance of those Heavenly Truths, to which I now assent. But this is a Secret even to my own Domesticks ; and whether such a Caution is Criminal, I am not yet able to determine.

WITH what Rapture, what Attention, did I listen to this Language ! I bless'd the Accents, that told me — my Friend, — my Orramel, had embraced the Christian Faith : An Angel's Song would have been less melodious : I look'd upward, and with a grateful Elevation of Mind, gave the Glory to the Supreme Disposer of all human Events. The Instinct was from above, that first moved me to ransom this young Captive ; thence was the Spring of my Compassion : It would be Vanity, it would be the most criminal Arrogance, not to ascribe this Action to the assisting Deity.

THE illustrious Orramel made it his Joy, his Study to evidence his Affection : He told me, his Father died since we parted in *Spain*, and that he had left five Daughters, which he had by several of his Wives : He offer'd me the Choice of his Sisters, if I had any Thoughts of Marriage,

riage, and promised a Dowry with her to my own Content: One of them, he said, was privately bred a Christian, by her Mother, a beautiful Woman of *Armenia*: I was pleased with the Proposal, and impatient to see my fair Mistress. In the mean Time, he made me a Present of several rich Habits, and two Negro's to attend me.

THE next Day, he conducted me to a fair Summer-House, whither he sent for his Sisters; who were all so handsome, that I was distress'd with my own Liberty, nor knew where to chuse, had not a Principle of Piety determin'd me to the young *Armenian*; who was not superior in Beauty to the rest, but there was a Decorum in her Behaviour, which the others wanted: She had more of the Modesty and Politeness of the *European* Women, to whom you know I was always partial: My Choice was fix'd, and the more I conversed with my fair Mistress, the more Reason I found to approve it. We were privately married by a Chaplain, belonging to the *British* Envoy. My generous Friend gave her a Fortune which abundantly repaid all my Losses; and after a prosperous Voyage, I am safely landed in *Holland*.

I have sent you this Relation, as a Memorial of my Gratitude to Heaven; whose Clemency has return'd me more than Measure for Measure, and largely recompenced that Liberality it first inspired.

Adieu.

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